Cannock
CHRONICLE

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HOMES WAITING LIST TOPS 1,000

By Jordan Harris

MORE than 1,100 families are waiting for a council house in Cannock Chase – and 33 of them have been on the list for at least 10 years.

New figures reveal that 1,187 people are currently on the list for a home. And of those, 514 people have been waiting for more than a year, 319 at least two years and 78 for more than five years.

There are about 5,500 council-owned homes in Cannock and surrounding towns such as Rugeley and Hednesford.

Housing chiefs recently announced plans to carry out improvements costing £35 million to council homes in Cannock, alongside plans to build 129 new properties in the district over the next three years to help reduce waiting lists.

The first council houses built in Cannock Chase since 1987 were constructed this year on The Moss Road Estate in Chadsmoor.

The waiting list figures have been branded a 'disgrace' by Councillor Frank Allen, housing portfolio leader on Cannock Chase Council.

He said: "The fact we haven't built any new homes for more than 20 years is disgusting.

"And whatever we do now, we are just trying to run up Niagara Falls.

Need

"The new homes we are building are needed but they are just a drop in the ocean, Councillor Allen added.

"In my time with the council I can recall having an empty housing list – that will never happen again."

Council spokeswoman Kirsteen Miles said that social housing is delivered to those who 'need' a home first, before those who simply 'want' one. She said: "Of the 78 applicants on the register for more than five years, only ten have made an expression of interest.

"So a large number are not in urgent housing need – they are just waiting for their ideal property or location.

"Only 16 of the 78 are not existing tenants," she added.

"We operate a choice-based lettings scheme, so there may not have been properties in the area requested, and some applicants are on register who have a 'want' rather than a 'need' for accommodation.

"Properties are allocated to people in the most need, so those on the register more than five years are not in desperate or urgent housing need."

Nirmal Samrai, head of housing and waste management, said: "There are a number of people on the waiting list, and there is a shortage of housing supply.

"We do our best to meet the needs of those applicants most in need."

IT REALLY IS FUN FOR OLD ROPE AT ANIMAL ZONE



Cara Mayne, deputy manager at Go Ape based on Cannock Chase, with some of the rope and a lemur

ANIMALS at a Staffordshire attraction can swing from ropes and scale climbing nets after adventure course Go Ape donated some equipment.

The lemurs, monkeys and meerkats at South Staffordshire College's Rodbaston Campus are already taking advantage of the donations from Go Ape at Birches Valley.

Go Ape manager Claire Potter said the equipment is an annual gift to zoos and enclosures across the UK.

She said: "We replace the ropes on our courses each year and rather than just throw them away we donate the equipment so that animals can have just as much fun.

"It is great to see the animals having so much fun and getting such good use out of our old ropes and nets."

And she said Go Ape was always keen to make sure the old equipment gets recycled rather than being thrown away.

The Animal Zone is home to more than 750 animals including meerkats, monkeys, rabbits and alpacas.

It will reopen to the public in February and the public can visit from 10am to 4pm, and every day during term-breaks. Visitors can enjoy a variety of activities including animal encounters, meet the keeper sessions, feeding and craft activities.

Go Ape is based on Cannock Chase and the junior tree tops course is open weekends over the winter and the adult tree top course will reopen in February. Visitors to the adventure centre can enjoy scaling the trees of the forest in the adult or junior tree top course which includes high wires, crossings and zip wires.

The site is currently looking to recruit instructors.

CALLS

Elderly are targeted by bogus couriers

BOGUS couriers are targeting elderly people in Cannock, Walsall, Norton Canes and Burntwood with a spate of suspicious calls.

Seven incidents were reported in 48 hours. The suspect, described as a male with a foreign accent, claims to be from the Met Police or New Scotland Yard.

He says the victim's debit or credit card has been cloned and recovered and then asks the victim to withdraw a large sum of cash as it is counterfeit. He says they will send a courier to collect it as a matter of urgency. Anyone who receives a suspicious call is urged to call police on 101.

ENTERTAINMENT

Singers and band in church concert

THERE will be a concert of music for Christmas at St Stephen's Church, in Bideford Way, Cannock, tomorrow, Friday, December 18, at 7.30pm.

The St Stephen's Singers will be joined by the very popular Staffordshire Band. They will be conducted by David Purkiss, and the choir will be conducted by Pauline Gooch.

There will also be light refreshments in the interval. Tickets are £5 and are available from choir members or by phoning 01543 577348.

COUNCIL

Care homes will get extra checks

THE quality of service at adult care homes in Staffordshire is set to come under increased scrutiny. The move comes after some county council members questioned the skills of staff in the region's 259 adult residential care homes.

The council's select committee on 'Safe and Strong Communities' has now asked to visit the region's care homes for their themselves to make assessments.

Civic officers already monitor about 500 providers across the region, ranging from temporary day nursing care centres to permanent residential care homes.

● Ordered – Page 5

INSIDE

MINE MODEL IS DEEP IN DETAIL



PAGE 10

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New president's vow on Chamber 'voice'



Chris Wheeler – 'proud'

THE new president at Chase Chamber of Commerce has promised members that their voice is heard at a local, national and international level.

Chris Wheeler, a Stone-based consultant at cost management company Auditel, formally accepted his new position at the Chamber's annual general meeting. In accepting the president's chain, he said: "I am proud to be a part of this very dynamic Chamber and will be continuing our work to ensure business has access to essential infrastructure, energy, skills and premises to support growth and competitiveness." Mr Wheeler takes over from Paul Wilde, who has been president for two years and who had represented the business voice on a wide range of issues including higher education, the Chamber awards, and the Growth Hub.

The AGM also saw the election to the council of Gill Durkin and Esther Bromley from Performance Through People and Support Staffordshire respectively.

Chamber director Chris Plant said: "With employment and investment at historically high levels, businesses are gearing up for a big year in 2016. It is now vitally important that firms are able to convert their growth ambitions into reality. The Chamber welcome our new president and look forward to supporting Chris Wheeler with his business growth ambitions.

"I would personally like to thank our outgoing president Paul Wilde for his efforts. His support has been invaluable; we have seen the developments of a number of new initiatives such as the Schools Forum, a countywide awards scheme and the largest exhibition in Staffordshire become part of our business calendar under his guidance."

999 bosses hit back at 'wrong hospital' claim

CLAIMS that patients from Cannock needing emergency attention are being wrongly sent to Stoke instead of Wolverhampton are 'completely unfounded', according to ambulance chiefs.

Mark Hackett, chief executive of the University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, made the accusation at a board meeting.

He said it is one of the reasons why hundreds of people are being made to wait longer than four hours to be dealt with at Royal Stoke University Hospital. But the claim has been rejected by bosses at West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) who said several factors are considered when deciding on which hospital to attend.

In a statement, the trust said: "We are disappointed to hear the concerns of the chief executive of University Hospital of North Midlands, which we believe are completely unfounded.

"It's important to note that when an ambulance crew respond to a patient who requires onward hospital treatment, it's not a case of simply just conveying them to another hospital as Mark Hackett suggests.

Pressures

"Whilst receiving hospitals consider whether a patients' home address is within their catchment area, the ambulance service must consider the patient's medical needs first and foremost, as well as where any previous treatment has taken place, their personal wishes and our own operational requirements to ensure we can continue to respond to 999 calls.

"Despite pressures at many of our hospitals including Stoke, Wolverhampton and Walsall, we continue to monitor and amend our operational requirements to ensure patients get the very best emergency care.

"The trust hasn't received any complaints from patients in relation to being taken to a perceived 'incorrect' hospital."

Royal Stoke University Hospital, near Newcastle, is about 28 miles from the centre of Cannock, while Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital, in Wednesfield, is nine miles away.

The A&E department at County Hospital in Stafford has been shut to patients between 10pm and 8am since December 2011.

Fiona to set up clinic for refugees



Cannock podiatrist Fiona McGeough is going to Calais to help set up a pop-up clinic to help with the migrant crisis

A PODIATRIST from Cannock is coming to the aid of migrants based in Calais when she visits the French town next month.

Fiona McGeough, aged 41, has been an expert in foot problems for the past 20 years, working both independently and for the NHS.

Along with two other qualified podiatrists, and three students, she will set up a pop-up clinic at the refugee camp on the outskirts of the port city.

In recent months, the population of the camp has quadrupled to more than 6,000 and is now considered the largest slum in Europe.

The Foot Project's team of six will be providing treatments for people living in the wasteland from January 24 to 27, and Mrs McGeough is hoping to make the trip regularly in the future.

"It's for a few days at the beginning but we are aiming to make it a regular thing," she said. "We've raised nearly £1,000 in cash donations so far, and we've been sponsored for the medical equipment we need. It's an awful situation, some of these people have walked hundreds of miles to get where they are so they are going to have issues with their feet, such as wounds."

Mrs McGeough is urging people to donate money for the trip, as well as new socks to give migrants.

For donations, log on to www.gofundme.com/thefootproject

More information can be found on facebook by searching The Foot Project – Calais Migrants.

You can also contact Mrs McGeough on 07528 191838 or visit www.cannockchiropodist.com

Countryside campaigners urged: Keep up pressure

CAMPAIGNERS have been urged to ensure councillors are 'held to their word' on not selling off parts of the Staffordshire countryside.

It follows a meeting of the full county council at which Cannock Chase Green Party handed in a petition signed by almost 12,000 supporters calling on the authority not to sell its countryside estate, areas of outstanding natural beauty and green spaces.

Councillors agreed that the petition should be accepted and the council should not sell any of its green spaces.

Paul Woodhead, local co-ordinator for the Greens, said: "Whilst this is a very good day, and we are pleased that councillors have committed not to sell our green spaces, we must continue to work on the campaign to ensure they are held to their word. There still remains deep concern regarding the role of corporations in the running of the countryside."

A total of 11,700 people put their names to the petition, but bosses have assured them the land being considered for sale is unused public space. Bosses also say it will not be popular beauty spots such as Cannock Chase. A public consultation runs until January 24.

Councillor Mark Winnington, the council's economy boss, said there had been 155 written responses so far.

He said: "We know the countryside estate is a valued, loved part of the county's heritage. I would encourage anyone who has an opinion on how we preserve our estate for future generations to have their say."

Woman injured in crash near tower

A WOMAN was taken to hospital after being cut out of a car following a serious crash in Cannock.

Emergency services were called to Broadhurst Green after reports of a two-vehicle collision near to the junction with Brindley Road.

Paramedics found the woman, who was in 20s, complaining of neck and back pain.

West Midlands Ambulance Service spokesman Jamie Arrowsmith said: "We were called at 11.22am to Broadhurst Green near to the BT Tower.

"Staff assessed the female's condition and offered treatment at the scene. She was then transferred to the Royal Stoke Hospital for further treatment."

The crash happened just after 11am on Sunday.

55 investigations of slavery in year

POLICE are investigating 55 cases of modern slavery in Staffordshire following reports in the last year.

Since last October a report of potential ongoing incidents has been made in every single policing area in the county including Cannock Chase.







Damage to memorial for miners condemned

A LEADING MP has condemned the damage caused to the mining memorial in Rugeley – after the Cannock Chase representative raised the issue in Parliament.

In September, a new memorial to the 115 miners killed underground while working at the Lea Hall and Brereton Collieries was unveiled. Four nine foot statues were erected on each corner of the Globe island, but one was severely damaged when a car crashed into it and fled the scene.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Cannock Chase MP Amanda Milling asked theJohn Whittingdale, The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to condemn the actions of the callous driver.

Ms Milling said: "I had the honour and privilege to attend the unveiling on the memorial. It is so upsetting to see the damage caused, not only because it is in memory of the local miners who died, but because so many people and local groups like Lea Hall and Brereton Collieries Memorial Society worked so hard to make the project a reality."

Mr Whittingdale said: "I was concerned to hear about the damage to the memorial to the miners who lost their lives, especially as it came so soon after more than 2,000 people lined the town's streets for its unveiling in September."

He added through the memorial gran scheme, that, if a registered charity was responsible for the care of the memorial, it could benefit from a VAT refund paid on repair work.

Children in fine voice for festival

PUPILS from Rugeley were among those taking part in a festival of Christmas music at Lichfield Cathedral.

The choir from Chase View Primary were invited to commence the solo section of performances with 'Something Special'.

Many parts of the concert, performed by the Staffordshire youth Orchestra, were being filmed as a promotional video to celebrate music in Staffordshire.

The Chase View children were joined in the Massed School Choir by pupils from Christchurch, St Chad's, Five Ways, St Michael's, St Mary's, Richard Crosse, Howard of Elford, St Thomas and Two Gates Primary and sang a range of traditional Christmas songs with the assembled audience.

Santa about to set out for Morrisons

CANNOCK Lions have arranged for Santa to visit Morrisons, Cannock, on Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4pm.

Anyone interested in joining or knowing more about Cannock Lions can call Mark Wyton on 0845 3334967.

Couple win a million after £55k prize



Denise and Stuart Powell

A LUCKY couple who scooped £1 million on the lottery have revealed their second windfall in almost four years was the result of a mix-up at the shop where they bought their ticket.

Stuart and Denise Powell from Featherstone became millionaires after netting £55,464 on the lottery nearly four years ago. Lorry driver Stuart said he wouldn't have bagged the UK Millionaire Maker win, if it wasn't for the shopkeeper giving him a ticket for the wrong date.

The 50-year-old HGV worker said: "I buy a ticket every week but missed the draw on November 20, which was the big rollover draw.

"The previous week I thought I had bought a lucky dip for November 20 but the lady in the shop got her dates mixed up and I'm so glad she did."

Despite their new found riches, the down to earth couple, who have been married 22 years, said the win won't change their lifestyle.

Father-of-three Stuart added: "You can't sum up the feeling but I won't stop working. I enjoy my job and I've got shifts next week, but the money is super. The money will help my family and to know my three boys will be mortgage-free is wonderful. I played so if I won I could help them and that's what we will do."

Denise, 44, said: "I just kept checking the numbers over and over. It was the raffle number and I wanted to be sure I had counted all the zeros correctly."

Even their sons didn't believe their winning ways could happen twice. Their eldest Matthew, 26, refused to believe it, Adam, 25, went back to bed and Nathan, 20 was at university and didn't answer the phone.

Schools earn praise as three Rs above average

EDUCATION chiefs in Staffordshire have praised the hard work of schools after the county recorded improved results in the national league tables.

The proportion of primary school pupils in Staffordshire achieving the expected level in reading, writing and maths has risen to 80 per cent. The result marked a three per cent improvement on last year. Figures for individual subjects were even more promising.

In writing 88 per cent of pupils managed a level 4 at Key Stage 2, up from 86 per cent the previous year. In maths, results rose by three per cent to 87 per cent and pupils attaining the expected level in reading increased by two per cent to 89. The biggest improvement was in grammar, punctuation and spelling which has shot up from 73 per cent to 80.

Staffordshire County Councillor Ben Adams, education and skills chief, said: "These initial results show that our work to improve standards in the county's primary schools is paying off, and I am pleased that improvements have been made across reading, writing and maths.

"Working with schools, and along with our school improvement partner Entrust, we have put in a lot of support to help raise standards.

Expertise

"We provide tailored support across a wide range of subjects including English and maths, along with support on assessment and monitoring, and improving teaching and learning.

"We also encourage schools to form partnerships with others to ensure they are making the most of local expertise and experience.

"We want to ensure all pupils in Staffordshire are given a solid foundation on which to build upon in future years, both in education and ultimately in employment. I am pleased we seem to be consistent in improving results, but we want to go further and move faster to collectively raise standards even more.

"We want to ensure that every child in Staffordshire has the opportunity to attend an excellent school, fulfil their potential and be equipped with the skills and knowledge to lead fulfilling lives and rewarding careers." Staffordshire ranked joint 79th in the country.

Last year the Government changed minimum requirements so schools where less than 65 per cent of pupils are not achieving level 4 in the three areas would be considered to be underperforming.



Pupils with Chief Fire Officer Peter Dartford are Olivia Jones, Izaak Minton, Katie-Rose Sturgess, Libbie Jones and Isla Sheldon

Pupils dig in for time capsule

PENKRIDGE youngsters s helped to bury a time capsule in the grounds of the village's new community fire station.

The capsule included photographs of the current crew with a short biography from each firefighter based at the £1.8m facility on Boscomoor Lane, which opened in September.

Pictures of both the old and new stations were inserted along with a poster created by pupils from St Michael's Primary.

Chief Fire Officer Peter Dartford buried the time capsule with station manager Graham Mills, crew members and the public all in attendance.

The celebration was followed by community engagement sessions. Coffee and cakes were served during the open events.

Station manager Mr Mills said: "We very much enjoyed welcoming pupils from St Michaels Primary school to this celebration along with local dignitaries.

"It is a memorable milestone in what I hope will be the rich history of the new Penkridge Community Fire Station."

NEWS IN BRIEF

20 jobs still up for grabs at APC

TWENTY jobs are still available at Cannock delivery giant APC Overnight following a recruitment drive.

In October, the firm made 100 new posts available at its National Sortation Centre at Kingswood Lake in preparation for the Christmas rush.

The positions are predominantly for warehouse sorting staff to work throughout the night but there is a also a ongoing requirement for extra drivers as well.

Chief executive officer Jonathan Smith said the majority of roles would be made permanent after Christmas.

Safety concerns on hoverboards

DEFECTIVE and potentially dangerous hoverboards have been found on sale in Staffordshire.

Trading standards bosses said some failed to meet EU safety standards and are warning residents considering buying them as Christmas gifts to be on their guard.

Staffordshire County Council's trading standards leader Gill Heath, said: "Some brands on sale may be safe to use, but we'd ask people to follow advice if they're thinking of buying one of these items, and perhaps think again if they're not sure."

Relief as criminal court charge axed

STAFFORDSHIRE'S Police & Crime Commissioner has welcomed the scrapping of a compulsory charge for people who appear in court.

Justice secretary Michael Gove announced the criminal court charge, brought in last April for defendants to pay on top of fines, compensation orders and legal charges, is being dropped from December 24.

Commissioner Matthew Ellis said: "I have made my views known on this an am relieved it is being dropped."

Quarrying plan goes to Secretary of State

PLANS to protect local communities and the environment during future quarrying in Staffordshire have been approved for submission to the Secretary of State.

The Minerals Local Plan shows how local communities and the environment will be protected and where sand, gravel and other minerals will come from over the next 15 years.

It will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Life-saver on the M6

A MOTORWAY service station near Cannock has been installed with life-saving equipment. Automated External Defibrillators have been installed at Hilton Park services on the northbound and southbound carriageways of the M6 between junctions 10a and 11.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



WE need safe, secure, flood-proof homes on high, well-drained plots. We do not need to trim a piffling 20 minutes off the rail journey time from London to Birmingham. As Cumbria drowns, our beloved leaders are still preparing to spend £50,000 million or more on HS2. What a monumentally misguided set of priorities. Our grandchildren will think we were mad.

WINTER is icumin-in, so it's off to the annual pre-Xmas entertainment, an evening of mediaeval music with ye authentic olde instruments. These events are a reminder of how our horny-handed ancestors were prepared to suck, blow, pluck, crank, squeeze or wallop almost anything in the hope of getting a tune out of it. Hollowed-out gourds, stretched skins, reeds, lumps of wood and pigs' bladders were all pressed into service. This concert featured a bagpipe which looked like a hockey stick inserted in a dead badger. I bet you'd get much the same noise using a live badger. The one disadvantage of England defeating the Spanish Armada in 1588 was that it delayed the arrival of guitars, and proper music, for several centuries.

WHEN Donald Trump calls for a ban on all Muslims entering the United States, he is surfing on one of those occasional waves of paranoia that have swept America ever since it was first settled. From witches to flying saucers, via communists, alien abductions, Freemasons, Catholics and secret brain implants (can you feel it, just under your ear?), the US seems to need occasional panics and conspiracy theories. I can't think of any explanation for this desire to be frightened except that the US arms industry is enormous and every new panic surely sells more guns.



MIND you, when Trump alleges that cops are scared to enter some parts of London, the instant denial by the Metropolitan Police is unconvincing. Fact: most British towns and cities have their share of dodgy streets. I recall the Liverpool gag about a neighbourhood so tough that the police patrolled not in pairs but in threes – and that was inside the police station. This joke is at least 50 years old.

FIRST, those little peaked hats were known as Lenin caps after the leader of the Russian revolution. Then, when the Beatles adopted them, they became Lennon caps. As Britain became a member of the EU and we all got more continental, they were marketed as Breton fishermen caps. And now, favoured by the Labour Party leader, they are being sold on eBay as Corbyn caps. You can't help noticing how many men of a certain age are now wearing them. Or wondering whether they were bought in tribute to Vladimir, John, French fishermen or Jeremy.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Fears as thousands of tenants evicted

CANNOCK Chase has been ranked 21st out of 30 areas in the West Midlands region for tenant evictions.

Meanwhile, landlords in the Black Country filed more than 3,000 court claims to evict tenants in 12 months.

Homelessness charity Shelter has expressed fears for the increasing number of people in the region facing eviction.

The Ministry of Justice figures show tenants in Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell are among the most at risk in the West Midlands of being told to leave.

Out of the 30 areas surveyed, the three boroughs ranked fourth, fifth and sixth respectively as the riskiest for people in rented accommodation.

Walsall and Staffordshire districts fair more favourably in the figures. There were 592 eviction notices in Walsall between October 1, 2014 and September 30 this year – one in 69 homes, ranking the borough 13th in the region.

Shocking

Cannock Chase's ranking was based on 146 claims from landlords – one in 86 rented properties.

Stafford ranked two places lower with 171 eviction notices, equating to a lower ratio of one in 93 homes. Shelter says more families are at risk of eviction due to cuts in housing benefit and a lack of affordable homes pushing people towards private tenancies.

Alison Mohammed, a director at the charity, said: "It's shocking to think that each and every week, hundreds of people in the region receive a notice through the door."

Bailiffs sent in 7,000 times over cash owed

By Jordan Harris

BAILIFFS were instructed to collect debts owed to Cannock Chase Council more than 7,000 times in less than five years, new figures show.

According to a Freedom of Information request, the council handed over 14,303 council tax cases to bailiffs since January 2011, of which 6,819 were visited.

In the same period, bailiffs visited 386 of 1,122 cases of businesses owing rates to the council. The figures come after bosses launched a crackdown last year on unpaid rates.

At present, more than £7 million is being chased in council tax and business rates. As of November 25, 368 companies owed the council a total of £1,532,635, while 10,030 council tax payers owe £5,537,328.

Councillor George Adamson, leader of Cannock Chase District Council, said: "If people are in genuine need of help and can't pay their council tax then we will always seek to help them.

Stance

"However, if it is a case of people avoiding paying tax then we will come down hard on them.

"We have a tough stance on this because it is unfair on people who do pay their taxes and business rates if others aren't.

"Our business rate collections will improve next year, I have been told, as it did last year. Our council tax payment rate improved last year and I have been told it will go up again."

Under the new enforcement policies introduced last November to help with debt collection, it was decided that action was needed to address individuals and companies who regularly defaulted on their bills, ran up large debts and tried to avoid their debts being recovered.

A new monthly review system was also introduced to help the council keep on top of unpaid council tax and business rates, while it also started to use legal powers it previously hadn't to chase up debts.

Keys Park carol concert success



The Hednesford Salvation Army perform to the 150 people in attendance at the Keys Park carol concert

MORE than 150 people turned out for an annual carol concert at Hednesford Town FC.

The evening at Keys Park also offered remembrance of what life was like for footballers who went away to war a century ago along with tales of Christmas as a professional player.

Bringing together numerous community groups, the evening was led by club chaplain, Rev Paul Kelly.

Hednesford's St Peter's School choir performed two medleys, first team players Dan Crane and Tom Thorley read the Christmas Day truce of 1914, and there were readings from club staff Paula Smith, Gavin Blackwell and manager Bernard McNally before Crane's daughter Livi performed a solo piece and the Hednesford Salvation Army provided musical accompaniment to the carols, sung both inside the Chase Suite and out on the main stand.

Paula, one of the organisers, said: "The evening has once again proved to be a popular one with a number of different organisations from Hednesford and the wider area coming along to support us."

A member of the Staffordshire Regiment Museum provided an insight into life during the First World War at Christmas, while Cannock Radio recorded proceedings and hoep to play it out on Christmas Day.

Money raised from the raffle held on the night will be split between the Sports Chaplaincy and Hednesford Salvation Army.

Nearly £4m made from charges on car parks

COUNCILS in Staffordshire and the Black Country made almost £4 million from car parking charges last year, new figures show.

Local authorities generated £3.89m from motorists after running costs were taken into account, research by the RAC Foundation found. Cannock Chase Council made £232,000 while Stafford Borough Council was left with £769,000 of excess cash.

Wolverhampton City Council made the most during the financial year, posting a surplus of £1.6m. Dudley Council was next, recording a surplus of £944,000. Sandwell Council's total was £351,000. Both Walsall Council and South Staffordshire Council made a loss from their car parks.

The RAC Foundation, which analysed parking data in financial reports from local authorities, urged councils to reveal 'exactly where this huge excess ends up' but the Local Government Association (LGA) insisted surplus money was invested back into transport projects, such as improving car parks and roads.

RAC Foundation director Steve Gooding said: "When a parking profit is made the law states that, essentially, the money can only be spent on transport and environment projects.

"We are simply asking that all councils publish annual reports to tell drivers exactly where this huge excess ends up."

However, the LGA said the report was 'wholly inaccurate and misleading' and 'peddles the myth that councils make a profit from parking'.

Children enjoy meeting Santa

CHRISTMAS came early for the children of Cannock as they were treated to a special meet and greet with Santa at the shopping centre's free grotto.

Children could get their photograph taken with Father Christmas and tell him their wish list. Each child then received a free treat courtesy of the shopping centre.

There was also a face painter on hand which turned little shoppers into elves, fairies, snow flakes and snowmen. Centre manager Natal Chapman said: "There was a great atmosphere in the centre and the grotto certainly proved to be very popular.

"I would like to say a huge thank to the Rotary Club for arranging Santa's visit and I would also like to say a special thank you to Argos for providing us with a fantastic Christmas tree."

Talk will look back at Christmas in trenches

A TALK will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum today on Christmas in the First World War trenches.

Author Joss Musgrove-Knibb will be using original letters, artefacts and photographs for the talk at 2pm. Admission is £4 on the day.

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Stock up on essential medicines say doctors

FAMILY doctors in Rugeley and Cannock are reminding people to plan ahead by stocking up their medicine cabinets and ordering repeat prescriptions.

To ensure everyone stays well over the Christmas period, they say, it is important to make sure medicine cabinets contain all the essential items ahead of reduced opening times, bad weather or sickness.

Those who take regular medication should make sure they have ordered enough medication to last through the festive period or ask their GP practice for a new prescription.

Dr Mo Huda, a Rugeley GP and chair of Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: "No-one wants to interrupt their festive period to drive off in search of medication, or the out-of-hours service, because they have run out of their prescription. Make sure you have everything you need to deal with minor health problems or your long-term conditions at home."

A new initiative called Patient Online means people can now register with their GP practice to request repeat prescriptions online as well as book appointments and have access to some of their health records.

Medicine cabinet essentials include painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, including a version for children; over-the-counter cough, cold, flu and indigestion remedies; plasters; bandages; antiseptic cream; thermometer. For health information at Christmas visit www.nhs.uk/staywell

Bikes worth £15k stolen in break-in

FIVE bikes worth more than £15,000 in total were stolen during a break-in at a secure garage in Market Place, Abbots Bromley.

They are described as a black Specialized S-Works Tarmac SL4 2012, a black Camber Comp 29ER mountain bike, a Trek 5200 road bike, a metallic dark grey Trek 5200 2010 road bike and a Trek Fuel EX9 mountain bike.

Meanwhile, expensive bikes were stolen during two burglaries in a Cannock road within hours of each other.

Two homes in Beverly Hill were targeted in the early hours of Monday, December 7. The stolen items include a white Trek Session downhill bike, and a white and orange Ronanda carbon mountain bike. Anyone with information should call police on 101.

Festive concert is given by choir

THE Chase Choral Society Mixed Voice Choir performs in Huntington tomorrow night (Friday). The Christmas concert is at St Thomas's Church, Stafford Road, at 7.30pm. Refreshments will be available.

Call for new inquest on hospital boy



Jonnie Meek with his mother April Keeling

A NEW inquest is set to be held into the death of a three-year-old boy at the former Stafford Hospital – amid fears the original verdict was wrong.

And health bosses have been criticised for their 'poor' response to concerns raised by Jonnie Meek's family, with an expert saying there is evidence of a 'closed culture' in the NHS.

An inquest ruled that Jonnie died of natural causes brought on by pneumonia three hours after being admitted for an appointment on August 11 last year. But parents John Meek and April Keeling from Cannock believe he died from a reaction to a new feed put directly into his stomach.

After carrying out an independent investigation, consultant paediatrician Dr Martin Farrier has now called for the original inquest verdict to be scrapped. He said it was 'most plausible' that Jonnie, who suffered from rare congenial disability de Grouchy syndrome, died due to an allergic reaction to the new type of milk.

Andrew Donald, chief executive at Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group, apologised to Jonnie's parents for the length of time it has taken to get answers. He confirmed the health body would seek to get the original inquest verdict quashed and ensure a new inquest was held.

Dr Farrier added: "I consider that problems of a closed culture within the NHS continue to exist."

Mr Robert Courteney-Harris, from University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, which has taken over running the hospital, said: "Since we have integrated services, the renamed County Hospital has seen a number of improvements following a record investment of £250m."

Care home ordered by inspectors to improve

A CARE home in Cannock needs improving in four out of five key areas, a report by health watchdogs reveals.

Some Abbey Court staff did not show compassion in dealing with elderly residents and medicines were not always administered or stored safely, says the report from the Care Quality Commission.

Inspectors made an unannounced visit to the Heath Hayes home in October.

It was their first visit since the service was taken over by Cannock-based Avery Homes.

The facility in Heath Way, provides accommodation and nursing care for up to 83 people, with 73 living there at the time of the CQC visit.

The independent regulator has now published its findings which revealed that the home required improvement in safety, effectiveness, care and leadership.

The company has been issued with a warning notice for two breaches of the regulations over the management of medicines.

At the last inspection in February, Abbey Court was deemed as not meeting regulations in the area of managing medicines and consent to treat issues.

Requests

During the latest visit inspectors found that although there had been improvements in obtaining consent, there were still concerns over the safe management of residents' medicines.

Inspectors found there was no registered manager in post, and there was not enough staff to deal with requests for help.

Residents were not encouraged to eat and drink when they showed no interest in mealtimes. Some staff did not demonstrate a kind and compassionate approach to care and on occasions inspectors found residents' dignity and right to privacy were not respected.

They also reported that residents with dementia did not receive support to take part in social activities or hobbies to improve their wellbeing.

The CQC found that the service was not consistently well-led but said care plans were being improved.

Sue Howard, deputy chief inspector for adult social care in the central region, said: "People are entitled to services which provide safe, effective, compassionate and high quality care."

£10k burglary hits scrap firm



Company boss Darren Owens at Chase Metal Recycling off Chaseside Drive, Cannock

MORE than £10,000 worth of metal has been stolen from a scrap dealer in Cannock.

A cash reward is being offered for information leading to a conviction. Copper, brass and crushed central-heating tanks were taken from Chase Metal Recycling at Chaseside Industrial Estate.

The burglars also made off with and damaged office equipment ranging from laptops to electrical hand tools. It has left the firm a further £6,000 out of pocket. The company was recently victim to a devastating fire which boss Darren Owens said cost them more than £100,000.

He said: "We want the public to know that we are still open, and we still purchase scrap cars, ferrous and non-ferrous metals.

"We are offering a large cash reward leading to the conviction of the gang."

The burglary happened between 9pm on November 30 and 1.30am on December 1 at the unit off Chaseside Drive. Mr Owens said the burglars also tried to break into a large safe, which was empty as it is no longer used.

A police spokesman said: "Entry was gained from the Hyssop Close side of the property along a public footpath. nyone who may have witnessed any suspicious behaviour is asked to call 101 quoting incident 113 of December 1."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man badly hurt in two-car crash

EMERGENCY services rescued and treated a seriously injured man after a road traffic collision in Rugeley.

West Midlands Ambulance Service was called to Sandy Lane shortly after 10.10pm on Tuesday last week.

An ambulance service spokeswoman said: "Fire and ambulance staff arrived to find two cars which had been involved in a collision.

"One man, believed to be in his 30s, was trapped in one car and upon assessment by ambulance staff was found to have serious head and chest injuries," she added.

Health workers pick up accolade

A TEAM of health workers who work with visually impaired patients in Staffordshire have won a national award.

The staff from Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust picked up the Health Business Award in the category of NHS collaboration for their work with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The project provides training to local firefighters, raising awareness of blindness and partial sightedness. The award was presented at a ceremony in London.

MP hails efforts of postal workers

GAVIN Williamson has praised posties in the build-up to Christmas.

The MP for South Staffordshire gave the words of encouragement as he visited Royal Mail's Landywood delivery office.

"It was great to meet the team here at Landywood," he said.

"Our postal workers do such an important job at this time of year, and I would like to thank them for their efforts and wish them all the best over the busy festive period."

Santa special trains at steam railway

A STEAM railway is running Santa special trains in the run-up to Christmas. Amerton Railway is based at Amerton Farm and Craft Centre and has set up a Christmas grotto.

Trains will be running this weekend, as well as on Christmas Eve.

Tickets are £4.50 for adults and £6.50 for children, including a present, and can be booked on 01889 270294.

The railway has been running since 1990 and its engines include the Stafford-made locomotive Isabel.

Five-mile ramble

THE Chase & District Group Ramblers embark on an easy five-mile walk at Gentleshaw this weekend. The meeting point on Sunday is Ye Olde Windmill Inn, Windmill Lane and the departure time 10am prompt. The walk leader is John on 01543 686429.



IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



Priorities all wrong on Gazza allegation

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, when Gazzamania was at its height, it felt like I was the only person in the country who wondered what all the fuss was about.

Yes, there was the occasional flash of brilliance, those electrifying mazy runs that would leave defenders bamboozled, but it always seemed to me he was more famous for crying, belching, and generally making a fool of himself than for anything he achieved on the pitch.

Now, as he approaches his 50th birthday, the former midfielder shows few signs of maturing.

His battles with the bottle and bizarre behaviour have been well documented, and last month he stunned the audience at Wolverhampton Civic Hall with a stupid comment about not being able tell whether a black security guard was smiling or not.

Funny? Not remotely. Offensive? Certainly. The man is clearly an imbecile.

And if I were the security guard in question, I would feel entitled to question my employers about whether this idiot should be allowed to perform at the Civic again.

Inquiry

What I do not understand, though, is how an unfunny and offensive joke has become a police matter.

West Midlands Police says it has received a report of a "hate crime", has taken a statement from the victim and an inquiry is ongoing.

But crude and objectionable though the comment was, I doubt very much whether there was any hatred in Gazza's words, let alone a crime.

I would also be very surprised if the complainant was the security guard himself, who I suspect is made of sterner stuff.

More likely, I imagine, it will have come from one of those thin-skinned activists who is always first to take offence on somebody else's behalf, and spends most of their spare time urging people to sign petitions on Facebook.

Maybe it is unfair to blame the police for investigating the alleged "hate crime".

If they ignored it, the Guardian readers would have had a field day. And of course, there may be more to the story than meets the eye.

On the other hand HM Inspectorate of Constabulary has just panned West Midlands Police, saying the force is failing to protect children from abuse and failing to carry out basic checks on sex offenders.

You may also recall that earlier this year, head of the National Police Chief's Council Sara Thornton said that burglary victims may not always be visited at home as police prioritise other crimes, saying that officers need to shift their focus away from "traditional" offences.

Well call me a "traditionalist" if you like, but I think somebody might have their priorities wrong here.



Joel Richards, who was also named as Referee of the Year



Councillor Darren Cooper attends the official opening



Owen and Suzy Richards on the badminton court in the hall

Sports hall honour for family hit by tragedy

Emotions ran high as a sports hall was officially opened in memory of Joel Richards. **DAVID COSGROVE** reports

"I WISH Joel had been a Premier League referee and he was here unveiling his own plaque for his own merits – not having to do it like this."

The heartbreaking words of the mother of Tunisia terror victim Joel Richards as a sports hall in his home town was named after him.

The Joel Richards Sports Hall was unveiled by his younger brother Owen at the official opening of Wednesbury Leisure Centre last Wednesday.

Joel, aged 19, was murdered in the terror attack in Sousse in June, alongside his uncle Adrian Evans and grandfather Patrick Evans – while Owen survived.

The boys' mother Suzy said the loss of three members of a close-knit family group had left 'a big void', but 16-year-old Owen has been a rock.

Suzy, 46, said: "I'm unbelievably proud but also very emotional.

Shining

"There were lots of tears because it's so sad that this had to happen.

"It was heartbreaking for me, my mum and Owen and there's a big void in our lives now.

"We went from a family of six to a family of three within 24 hours."

She added: "For Owen especially it's so difficult to have to deal with such a big loss at such a young age.

"He is a product of my dad [Patrick], my brother [Adrian] and Joel as they invested so much time in him and that's shining through now.

"Owen has saved us.

"The three of us all work together.

"He's grown up a lot and now he knows what's important in life.



Owen Richards and The Mayor of Sandwell Barbra Price officially open the sports hall



Owen, left, with his uncle, grandfather and Joel

"What happened puts things into perspective."

Owen unveiled the plaque at a ceremony yesterday then headed into the sparkling new sports hall to have a quick session trying out the badminton and table tennis facilities with his school friends.

The teenager has shown courage and inner strength beyond his years to deal with the aftermath of the tragedy.

Suzy said he takes after his older brother – who was on course to become a Premier League referee – and is now looking to follow the same career.

Although he only lived to 19, his mother said Joel 'achieved more than some people do in their whole lives'.

Saddlers fan Joel, a former pupil at the town's Stuart Bathurst and Wood Green schools, was a keen sportsman and promising football referee. "He brought the best out of everybody," Suzy said.

"Joel was just so kind and had a great character.

"Owen is immensely proud of his brother and is now hoping to take refereeing up himself."

Six months on from the tragedy, the emotional scars still run deep for Suzy, her mother Maureen and Owen.

Emotional

But sticking together has helped them come through.

Owen, who turned 16 just a month before the attack, has started sixth form at Stuart Bathurst RC High School and College in Wednesbury.

He is studying PE, maths and biology at A-level. "We're still feeling it really hard," Suzy said. "The tributes are lovely but it's very emotional and there's a big void.

"We are all staying strong for Owen.

"My motto is 'if Owen can do it, then we can'.

"Getting through each day isn't easy."

Emotional Sandwell Council leader Darren Cooper said: "None of us need to be reminded of the dreadful events that took place earlier this year in Tunisia.

"As a council we took the decision to name the sports hall after Joel Richards.

"No-one can underestimate the feeling across Sandwell about the tragic news about these people who were so brutally murdered on holiday in Tunisia.

"We wanted to name this new sports hall after Joel because we knew he was a keen sports enthusiast, so as a council we talked to the family and decided we would do it."

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Sessions put spring in step



From left, dance practitioner Helen Yeomons, Peter Johnson, Mrs Margaret (Peggy) Moon, singing practitioner Gillie Nicholls and David Moon

PEOPLE living well with dementia and their carers have been enjoying singing and dancing at St Barnabas's Community Hall in Cannock.

Funded by The Big Lottery and Staffordshire County Council, the sessions are run by Arts for Health at South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust who engage professional dance and singing practitioners to deliver the hour-long sessions.

Helen Wilson, Arts for Health project worker, said: "These sessions offer a safe environment for everyone to have fun socialising and participating in an activity which improves their wellbeing.

"Halfway through we stop for a chat and a cuppa which always goes down a treat and we are grateful to our local Asdas and Mars Galaxy for donating refreshments for this programme."

Sessions in the new year start on January 4 at Walton Village Hall, Stafford, and January 12 at St Barnabas's Community Hall, Cannock. Both sessions run from 1.30 till 2.30pm. For details, call Helen Wilson on 01785 221328 or email helen.wilson@sssft.nhs.uk

A GOLF club is set to expand under a £2 million programme which will see the size of its course double.

Bosses at Essington Golf Course have submitted plans to extend the current nine-hole course to a full-size 18-hole course, under plans which will create new jobs.

Owner Brian Saunders, from Wood Farm Golf and Leisure who own the site, said the expansion would cost £2 million and around 10 new jobs will be created. Work is still progressing on the nine-hole course, which will create 50 jobs, with bosses hoping it will open at the end of next year.

And if the new plans get the go-ahead, the current 80-acre site will be boosted by a further 88 acres. Mr Saunders said: "This is a long-term thing and when it is done it going to be an asset and it will create jobs – it is what is needed. It will be a top course.

Complete

"As soon as it is passed we are ready to do the work straight away, we want to get stuck in and get it open." In February this year plans for a clubhouse at the course, in Bursnips Road, were approved.

The clubhouse will have a lounge, meeting room, kitchen, and 63 car parking spaces. Work at Essington Golf Club started in 2008 but its completion date was pushed back due to the downturn in the building trade. Mr Saunders said that if the new plans are approved, work would start at the beginning of next year and take around two or three years to complete.

Parish councillors have held a meeting to discuss the plans, during which concerns were raised about the timescale of the project. Essington parish councillor David Clifft said: "The parish council met to discuss [the plans] and have got some concerns that the present one has been going on for seven to eight years and they are obviously concerned. A public meeting will be planned for after Christmas."

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Parents can get support

CONTACT a Family, which supports families with disabled children, is delighted the Chancellor George Osborne decided to scrap cuts to tax credits in his Spending Review.

However, other cuts to the benefits that the Government announced last summer will still go ahead.

If you are a parent of a disabled child and are worried about changes to benefits, please call our free helpline on 0808 808 3555.

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UNA SUMMERSON
Contact a Family

Retaliation is the answer

SO Charles wants the media to only ask him questions he allows.

The media should retaliate by refusing him any interviews or articles.

M FINN
Cannock

Nasty diatribe spoiled enjoyment of show

IN today's world, one would expect to be able to visit the theatre at Christmas time to see a warming family performance of White Christmas without being subjected to what I can only describe as the venomous, discriminatory rant of women who are most certainly old enough to know better.

During the performance I had to sit and listen in sheer disbelief as the two women sitting behind me debated whether or not they should officially complain as they had paid £20 and shouldn't have to put up with 'that'.

They described it as disgraceful, disgusting and annoying.

What was the subject of their nasty, distasteful diatribe?

A young adult with special needs. I am beyond words. There is no other minority group that could be so unashamedly conversed over in such a derogatory way, and rightly so. None of us knows what this world is going to throw at us and if disability doesn't touch your family it does not give you the right to be so cruel.

The irony is that that young man enjoying his Christmas treat didn't spoil my visit; it was the bile spewed by those two women that did.

K FLYNN
Penkridge

Our money could be put to better use

RIGHT To Buy is running down Britain's supply of affordable housing. In 2012 the Conservatives promised to replace all council houses sold off under Right To Buy, but this hasn't happened: in the period since the policy was announced the Government sold off over 26,000 homes – and built only 2,298. That simply does not add up. Manufacturing industries are also suffering under the Tories.

Commuting is a now common nightmare for thousands of people, crammed into train carriages like sardines, but what are the Tories doing to solve the problem?

The Institute of Economic affairs estimates £80 billion will be spent on HS2. Why? So their Tory chums in London can get up and down the country a little bit faster.

That money could be spent on building more train carriages in this country, improving the public transport infrastructure, increasing funding for the emergency services, funding the training of more nurses and doctors, building better flood defences and many more worthy investments.

MD
Cannock

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Cannock & Rugeley Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
cannock.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

More to life than wealth

WE live in a corrupt, violent and greedy world, where so many headlines are of atrocities, violence, poverty, neglect and abuse. We as individuals, as a nation, have turned our backs on the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of Jesus Christ. It is this man who said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). We need more grace, peace and joy this Christmas. We need to realise that there is more to life than just wealth, greed and selfishness.

MIKE H
Penkridge

Let's export our water

WITH the recent flooding in the north of England and parts of Scotland would it be a good idea to export water?

The water-producing nations could send water to the drought-stricken areas of the world.

It would no doubt cost a lot of money, but would do a great deal to help alleviate hunger in many parts, and provide work for many people. It is done with oil. Could it be done with water?

L E COMPTON
Norton Canes

Puzzled by waste move

HOW come a programme on the television, showing a huge landfill site exhuming gases obviously from rotting food waste, is followed by Cannock Chase Council saying our food waste can no longer be put to compost?

In the new year, all kitchen waste will go into landfill. Someone please explain the obvious.

MRS J BALL
Cannock

Help is out there if anyone needs care

ARE you struggling to obtain the help that you or a loved one require following discharge from hospital? Or perhaps in order to avoid unnecessary admittance into hospital?

Well, it is out there, all you have to do, is locate it. This can be a frustrating experience due to the serious lack of integration, communication and co-operation between the various factions, which can drive you to despair.

However, all you in fact have to do is to contact your district nurses, in the first instance.

If, however, it proves to be beyond their capacity to deal with, contact your GP and ask him to refer you to the Intermediate Care Team, via the First Point of Access.

A KYTE (CAMPAIGNER FOR BETTER CARE)
Great Wyrley

Please show respect towards shop workers

I WOULD like to wish readers a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. For many, this is always an exciting time, but in the last few shopping days it can be frantic.

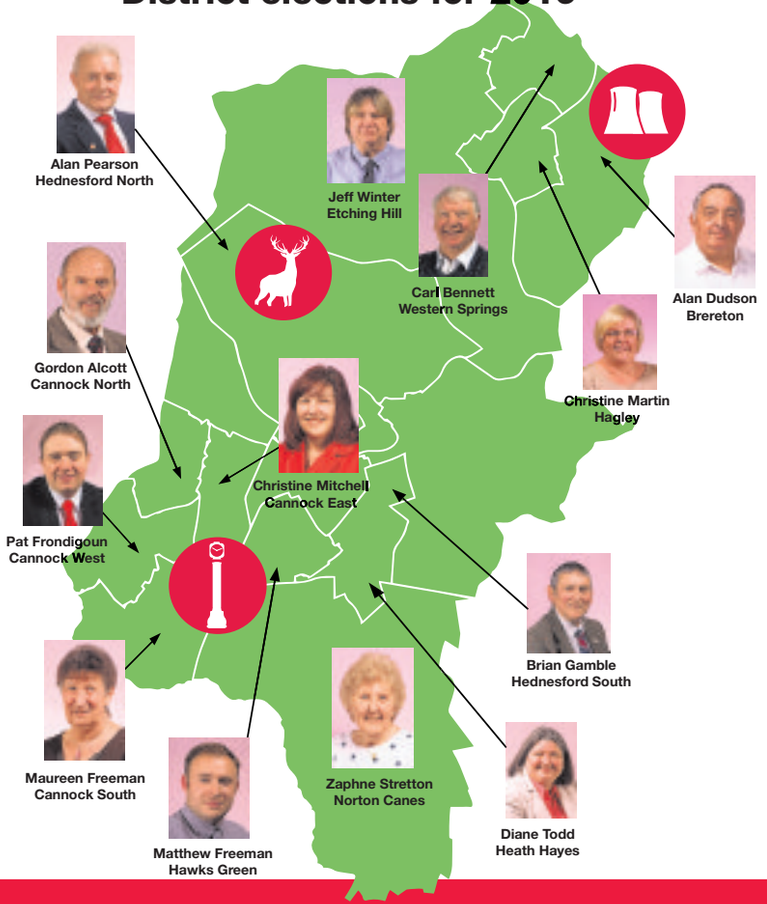
I want to gently remind everyone to remember that shop workers are people as well. They will be working really hard to make your shopping experience as stress-free and enjoyable as possible. A recent survey showed that every minute of the working day a shop worker is verbally abused, threatened with violence or physically attacked.

That is why Usdaw, the shopworkers' union, is asking customers to 'Keep Your Cool at Christmas'. It's a simple message, but remembering that shop workers are working extra hard at this time and treating them with respect will mean that everyone can have a happier Christmas.

JOHN HANNETT
General Secretary, Usdaw

Your Labour Team wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Our candidates for the Cannock Chase District elections for 2016



Should you need our help contact:

Cllr. George Adamson, Hednesford Green Heath 01543 426629
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Cllr. Frank Allen, Cannock North 01543 506743
Cllr. Carl Bennett, Western Springs 01889 800727
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Merry Christmas

Vote Labour

Grand tour of theatre is enjoyed

Hednesford A TG

THE speaker for the November meeting was Pamela Wade with a talk on life in a hospital school room. Most members did not even realise that hospitals offered this service.

Pamela was thanked for giving an insight into the excellent work done with such a wide range of educational needs of the young patients.

The next Guild meeting was the Christmas party, with entertainment from David Bartley with his Black Country humour.

Ten members of the Luncheon Club met at The Hollybush Garden Centre and walked through the festively decorated retail section to the restaurant area. The ladies were very impressed with the waitress service and the reasonable food available.

Several members joined with the Great Wyrley Guild and were treated to a guided tour of the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton.

All thoroughly enjoyed the visit, back stage and the dressing rooms, on the stage and in the auditorium. They visited the stalls and the dress circle including sitting in one of boxes and on A21 where the Princess Royal once sat.

Claudia, the guide, was very informative with her historical information and she even made refreshments at the end of the tour. Two guild members had an entertaining evening at the Federation supper and beetle drive held in Aldridge.

Meetings are on every second Mondayat 2pm at St. Peter's Church Hall.

Snowflake theme for decorated tree

Chadsmoor Tapestry Group



Jean Kimber prepares to decorate the tree

MEMBERS of Chadsmoor Tapestry Group were busy making snowflakes to decorate their tree for the annual St Luke's Church, Cannock, Festival of Trees.

The festival was held in the town centre church at the end of November.

Together with other organisations, businesses and charities the tapestry group was able, courtesy of St Luke's Church, to promote itself by decorating a tree.

Members make crocheted, beaded and beautifully embroidered snowflakes to go with the theme.

The tree was decorated by four members of the group and when finished, looked very beautiful.

Chadsmoor Tapestry Group meets every Wednesday at Chadsmoor Methodist Church and in addition to running workshops featuring various embroidery techniques, also works on community embroideries.

The group is currently nearing the completion of and embroidery for Pye Green Community Centre.

Clubs contribute to festival

SI Cannock & District/Friends of St

CANNOCK Soroptimists and Cannock Friends of St Giles were among the many businesses, organisations and charities who decorated a tree for the Tree Festival at St Luke's Church in Cannock this year.

St Giles' tree was decorated with green baubles and gold angels – green being the colour associated with the Hospice and the angels always part of the Hospice Christmas goods. Soroptimists used their colours of blue and yellow to decorate their tree. Any donations received via the St Giles tree will be used to aid the work of the hospice.

Donations received by SI Cannock will go to president Lynne Tuckley's two charities this year: St Giles and the Pathway Project, helping women victims of domestic violence.

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We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!



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'Bits and bobs' model to reveal coal mining past



Heritage – museum volunteer Derek Adamson takes a look at the model



The workshop is a hive of activity



The intricate model was made from scratch



A steam locomotive ready to get on the move

AN intricate model depicting a colliery scene from the 1960s has been donated to the Museum of Cannock Chase.

Using little more than 'bits and bobs' it was created from scratch by 89-year-old John Howe from Stafford.

Having been in his front room for the last five years it has now been donated to the museum where it will be used to teach youngsters about the area's mining heritage.

Mr Howe said it is not based on any particular site but intended to be representative of a colliery scene.

It took him more than two years to complete and around £500 of his own money.

He added: "The chimney on it is actually a car exhaust and I have got a smoker in there so it actually smokes.

"The tank that holds the fuel for it is an old meat tin located inside the chimney, the wiring is made of garden line and the spindles for the main wheels are crochet needles.

"It was really just made from bits and bobs and wood from around the house."

The site of the museum, in Valley Road, Hednesford, was once home to the Valley Colliery, the training pit for thousands of young men beginning their working lives in the local coal mining industry.

Mr Howe said he is delighted his model will now be enjoyed by members of the public.

"My daughter kept saying that other people ought to be able to look at it, rather than it being stuck in the front room here," he said.

"I really appreciate the fact that other people will see it now. I think it is great it is going to the museum."

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM ALL OF US TO ALL OF YOU

New vicar brings a busy year to an end

A VICAR is settling into his new role at a Burntwood church.

The service for the licensing of the Rev Richard Westwood at St Anne's Church in Chasetown was held last month.

It caps a busy year for the church, starting in April when the scaffolding came down after a new roof was finished.

The arrangements then started for the church's 150th anniversary celebrations. An exhibition including a display on the Chase Wakes was staged from July to September.

The exhibition was well attended with many people visiting more than once.

The anniversary celebrations ended with a service by the Bishop of Wolverhampton, who dedicated the new roof. This was followed by a campaign to collect shoe boxes with gifts for the International Aid Trust.

On November 11, Armistice Day, a service was followed in the evening by a display remembering the world wars projected onto the side and roof of the church.

There were also projections inside the church of the Chase Wakes, which are also 150 years old.

The church's Christmas fair raised £742. Christmas services will be held on December 20, 24, 25 and 27.

'Heart of the town' hope after success of festival

By Amardeep Bassey

SANKEY'S Corner has the potential to become the 'beating heart of Burntwood', according to Lichfield MP Michael Fabricant.

His claim comes after the town's first ever Christmas Festival, to which he was one of the many visitors.

Part of the road was pedestrianised for the day, and amusement rides, a road train and stalls got people in the festive spirit.

"This new Burntwood Town Council are really getting a grip on things," said Mr Fabricant.

"The Christmas Festival has proved itself to be a huge success, and I congratulate the council and the many volunteers and business donors who helped make the event so popular. Without the council having this positive attitude, it would never have happened. I hope that the Christmas Festival will grow in future years."

Mr Fabricant said he hoped the event, which cost the council £1,500, would encourage similar celebrations in the town square.

"What the Christmas Festival demonstrates, as did the go-kart races a while back, is the potential to make Sankey's Corner the beating heart of Burntwood," he added.

"I hope that in the future the area can be permanently pedestrianised and the surrounding buildings improved to provide an attractive space for locals to enjoy."

Groups benefit to the tune of £9,990



Representatives of the community groups at Burntwood Town Council's annual Grant Aid Presentation Evening

BURNTWOOD Town Council held its annual Grant Aid Presentation Evening at Burntwood Memorial Institute.

Councillor Pam Stokes, chairman of the council, welcomed everyone to the event and thanked them on behalf of the town council for the valuable part they all play in the community. Cheques totalling £9,990 were presented to the following organisations: 1st Burntwood Girls' & 2nd Burntwood Boys' Brigades £600; 1st Burntwood Guides £300; 1st Burntwood Scout Group £400; Burntwood Active 60s £200;

Burntwood Breast Care £500; Burntwood Carers £350; Burntwood Gardening Guild £150; Burntwood Gateway Club £440;

Burntwood In-Sight Group £200; Burntwood Live at Home Scheme £250; Burntwood Memorial Community Association £250; Burntwood St Matthew's Cricket Club £500; Burntwood Singers £100;

Chase Terrace Bowls Club £200; Chasewater & District Childminding Group £300;

Chasetown Darby & Joan Club £350; Embroidery for Burntwood Community £200; Fun Club £1,000; Fusion Credit Union Ltd £500; Hammerwich Cricket Club £200; Pathway Project £250; Playtime Burntwood Stay & Play £250; Redwood Park Friendship Club £200; St Giles Hospice £500;

St John's Community Church £600; The Sculpture & Art Foundation CIC £250;

Spark Springhill Grandparents' Group £500; SSAFA £150; T.L.C. £300.

Plans for city revamp submitted

PLANS to revamp the centre of Lichfield by building new shops and a cinema have been submitted.

The Friarsgate scheme planned for St John Street includes 25 shops, 10 restaurants and a multi-screen cinema.

U+I, formally known as Development Securities Plc, is behind the application which, it says, will create a 'major new destination' in the city centre.

Plans for Friarsgate were first announced 10 years ago but the credit crunch put the development in doubt. Around 900 new jobs will be created, the applicant says.

The planning application follows a public consultation in the summer. A decision is to be made on the scheme in spring 2016.

To view the scheme go to www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/friarsgate

Business park windows bid

PLANNING applications received by Lichfield District Council include:

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Market gets into the festive mood



Bridget and Roland Woolley were the winners of the Best Costume prize at Penkridge Market

A FINE FOOD and craft market will be held in Penkridge this festive season. It will take place on December 19 and will include a wide selection of craft stalls, food and drink.

Markets will also take place every Wednesday and Saturday leading up to Christmas, and The Old Deanery Farm Cafe will also be open, serving festive food, including a traditional turkey lunch. Despite the torrential rain and howling winds, thousands of people still turned out to enjoy the Penkridge Victorian Christmas Market.

Matt Williams, manager of Penkridge Market, said: "We were delighted that so many people still came to the event, as it is normally our biggest event of the year and takes a lot of planning. There was still a great atmosphere and the damp weather certainly didn't dampen people's spirits.

"All of the stallholders were dressed in Victorian costumes, the choir were singing Christmas carols and the whole site felt very Christmassy."

Bridget and Roland Woolley, who own Pets at Penkridge, won the prize for Best Costume, while Ann Fulford and Jane Sutherland of Banyan Tree won Best Decorated Stall.

Charity in plea to help start-up businesses

NEW figures have revealed that more than 400 new businesses were set up in Cannock Chase last year, but 23 per cent do not survive to see their second anniversary.

The news has prompted a charity to warn of a 'lack of support' available to help new ventures get through their first few months and years.

Business Debtline, run by the Money Advice Trust, says this 'support gap' means many small business owners are not being equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to get their businesses off the ground, with some failing unnecessarily as a result.

The figures, published by the Office of National Statistics, show that 415 new businesses were set up in the Cannock Chase local authority area in 2014 – a decrease of 29 per cent on the previous year.

At the same time, the area suffered 460 so-called 'business deaths' – de-registrations – which is up 46 per cent on 2013. The changes leave the total number of active enterprises in Cannock Chase at 3,665.

Currently, 23 per cent of new businesses set up in Cannock Chase do not survive to see their second birthday, with seven

By David Banner

per cent winding up in the first year. Business Debtline, which provides free and independent advice on business financial problems, said it helps around 30 small-business owners in Cannock Chase every year by phone or via its website.

Experts at the charity are concerned, however, that businesses are not seeking advice early enough – and that many more are not aware that help is available if they are struggling.

Joanna Elson, chief executive of the Money Advice Trust, said: "Unfortunately there is a real 'support gap' in the UK for people setting up a business.

"We need to do more as a country to make sure new businesses get the support and information they need in those crucial first few weeks and months."

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THE main active ingredient in many antifreezes, coolants and screen washes is ethylene glycol.

This is poisonous even in small doses to many animals including dogs and especially cats and has an initial sweet taste.

The first signs begin to show 30 minutes to 12 hours after ingestion and include vomiting, excessive thirst, incoordination, weakness and convulsions.

These symptoms will be followed 12 to 24 hours later by high heart rate and rapid breathing.

One to three days after ingestion kidney failure can occur.

Not all affected animals will show all of the aforementioned signs, and initial signs may be mild and go unnoticed.

Tests

These signs are not specific to this condition and may have other causes.

It is important to contact your veterinary practice immediately if you suspect that your pet may have licked or drank ethylene glycol, as the sooner your pet is treated the better the chances of recovery. Do not wait for the animal to show signs of illness.

Your vet may wish to perform blood, urine and other tests, and the animal may need to be hospitalised for intravenous fluids and other treatments.

While there is no antidote, in the early phases it may be possible to prevent the metabolism of ethylene glycol into more damaging compounds.

If damage to the kidneys has already occurred, the animal will require many days of intensive treatment, and unfortunately many of these cases do not survive.

Prevention of ingestion is vital by checking vehicles for leaks and ensuring these are promptly fixed, storing the products out of reach of children or pets and in closed original containers and disposing of any used or surplus product properly.

If a product is drained from a vehicle it should be collected for disposal, not allowed to leak onto drives or roads.

HS2 Phase Two – West Midlands to Crewe
Property Consultation 2015

hs2 engine for growth

Have your say on the property proposals for the West Midlands to Crewe route. You can find out more about the consultation and speak to HS2 Ltd staff by attending an information event in your area. Come to an event near you:

Hough Village Hall
Thurs 14 Jan, 12-8pm
Cobbs Lane, Hough CW2 5JN

Colwich and Little Haywood Village Hall
Fri 22 Jan, 12-8pm
Chilwell Avenue, Little Haywood ST18 0QZ

Kings Bromley Village Hall
Fri 15 Jan, 12-8pm
Alrewas Road, Kings Bromley DE13 7HW

Whitmore and District Village Hall
Sat 23 Jan, 10am-5pm
Conegreave Lane, Whitmore ST5 5HX

Yarnfield Village Hall
Sat 16 Jan, 10am-5pm
Meece Road, Yarnfield ST15 ONR

The Madeley Centre
Fri 29 Jan, 12-8pm
New Road, Madeley CW3 9DN

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre
Weds 20 Jan, 12-8pm
Eastgate Street, Stafford ST16 2LT

ANY QUESTIONS?
To find out more information about the consultation visit **www.gov.uk/hs2** or call **020 7944 4908**
This consultation closes on Thursday 25 February 2016.

www.gov.uk/hs2

Stag cuts majestic figure on Chase



This stag armed with a full set of antlers was spotted with his does among the foliage on Cannock Chase by Neal Mcintosh. Deer are often seen on the Chase at this time of year but drivers are warned to be alert as the animals sometimes stray onto the roads looking for a mate. It is estimated that up to 200 deer are killed in collisions every year in the county

Police step up patrols

MORE police officers will be patrolling town and city centres to ensure people remain safe this festive season.

Staffordshire Police want to keep people safe from violence or sexual assault and are urging people to know their limits.

Research by the independent charity Drinkaware has highlighted the temptation and pressures for people to drink even more at Christmas.

Chief Supt Jeff Moore said: "Alcohol can be a catalyst for violence and disorder and we would urge people to drink sensibly. We want everyone to enjoy themselves safely in our town and city centres whilst being aware of the risk they pose to themselves and others if they drink too much.

"Officers work closely with licensees and partners to minimise the potential for drink-related crime and anti-social behaviour.

"Unfortunately a few people do become involved in violence or disorder. We will look and target those people and immediately exclude people from an area. Most people will enjoy safe and pleasurable evenings out and we want to work with the community to make this happen.

"Alcohol reduces our ability to think straight, it narrows our focus of attention and gives us tunnel vision.

"If you are under the influence of alcohol you're more likely to be a victim or perpetrator of crime, with potentially very serious consequences.

"Many people will be out with friends – look after each other and don't leave them in vulnerable situations. Plan how you're getting home and avoid walking on your own."



Christmas Collection Calendar 2015

Please check dates below for any changes to your Christmas bin collections

Cannock Chase COUNCIL

Monday 21st December
Collections due Monday 21st will be made on Saturday 19th December 2015

Tuesday 22nd - 25th December
Collections due 22nd to 25th will be made 1 day earlier than normal i.e. 22nd on 21st and so on until Thursday 24th December 2015

New Year
Collections on Friday 1st January 2016 will be made 1 day later than normal i.e. 1st on 2nd January 2016

Collections return to your normal day from week commencing 4th January 2016

Normal collection days apply except for those days highlighted in **bold orange.**

December '15

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January '16

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Your new Waste and Recycling Calendar will be delivered in early March 2016

For more information call 01543 462621 or visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/wasteservices Search for 'Cannock Chase Life' @CannockChaseDC

50 arrests over online perverts

MORE than 50 suspected paedophiles have been arrested in less than six months in connection with sexually exploiting children in Staffordshire over the internet.

The county's police force has reached the milestone in recent days following the latest arrests as part of Operation Safenet which was launched in July.

One of the latest suspects was picked up on Thursday after officers executed a warrant in Lichfield and arrested a man on suspicion of possessing indecent images online.

In total, 52 people have been arrested and 72 have been removed out of harm's way.

The crackdown has already yielded successful convictions.

Police are not releasing details of anyone they have arrested until they are charged and appear in court.

Drunken boxers locked up for unprovoked attack on barman



Joshua Morgan

TWO drunken amateur boxers have been jailed for an unprovoked attack on a barman in Cannock town centre that left him fighting for his life.

By Adam Burling

Joshua Morgan fell unconscious to the ground and fractured his skull after being punched twice by James Robb, who then – along with co-accused Alistair Douglas – dragged the victim across a car park at the back of Poundland. After the attack in March 2014, Mr Morgan was in a coma, and months later could communicate only by eye movements. He is now limited to moving his head and forearms and can attempt to pronounce only single words, Stafford Crown Court heard.

Robb punched Mr Morgan with such force to make him unable to break his fall, said Mr James Dunstan, prosecuting.

Douglas did not strike the victim, but accepted he was there to assist Robb. Robb, aged 23, of Langdale Green, was jailed for three years and Douglas, 26, of Longford Road, both Cannock, got 27 months. Both admitted inflicting grievous bodily harm.

Judge Jonathan Gosling told them the attack had 'destroyed' Mr Morgan's life at the age of 20.

He said: "Joshua, I am sure, did nothing to provoke either of them." Mr Graham Henson, defending, said both defendants had shown genuine remorse and Robb had no history of violence.

Pitmen thank pitchside boys

A GROUP of 12 boys from Year 6 at Chadsmoor Junior School gave pitch-side assistance for Hednesford Town's home game against AFC Fylde.

Although the Pitmen lost 1-0, teacher Jeff Parkes said the boys 'had a great time'.

Through the Hednesford Town FC Supporters Association (HTFCSA), the club thanked the boys, parents and staff of Chadsmoor for attending.

"We hope they'll come back as regular supporters," said Scott Smith, HTFCSA chairman.

Anyone interested in taking their school team or children's side to Keys Park in order to be ball boys are asked to call the club on 01543 422870.

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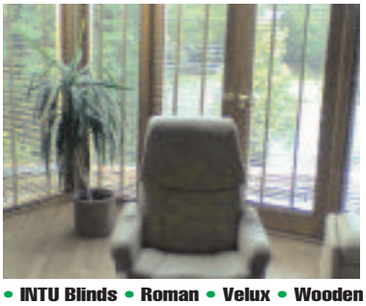
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£3,350 for playground

A CHEQUE for £3,350 was handed to bosses of a special needs children's playground in Cannock. The money, raised by the Walsall and South Staffordshire branch of The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, was presented at a special evening at the Victory Club, New Invention. The cash was raised for SNAP – Special Needs Adventure Playground – in Pye Green Road, which provides specialist play equipment. Barry Evans, honorary member of the Roll of Honour, said a further £535 was raised for next year's appeal through ticket sales and a tombola.

Cause of M6 death crash a mystery, inquest told

A CORONER could not reach a conclusion as to what happened in an accident on the M6 that led to the death of a 'remarkable' 65-year-old Penkridge man.

John Kamelski had been on his way to an appointment in Birmingham on July 3 when he collided with a static HGV at 8.10am. Members of the public rushed to save Mr Kamelski and carry out first aid.

However, he died the following day, the inquest in Cannock heard. The crash happened on the southbound carriageway in lane one next to the Hilton Services entry slip road between junctions 11 and 10a.



John Kamelski

South Staffordshire senior coroner Andrew Haigh concluded that the death was accidental and said: "I have heard that John was 65 when he died, which today is quite a young age.

"The area where the collision happened was the site of long-term roadworks, so there was a lot of slowing down and stopping by motorists compared to normal.

Evidence

"He has not realised this until the very last second and as a result he has driven into the back of a static large goods vehicle.

"We have heard evidence and I am sorry that I can't reach a clear conclusion.

"John was an experienced driver, he knew the route and drug and alcohol tests came back completely negative.

"My formal conclusion is one of accidental death."

After the crash happened, Staffordshire police sergeant Jon King pulled up at the scene and enlisted the help of other motorists to stop traffic. He also called on a member of the public to divert vehicles along the slip road at Hilton Park services, before dialling 999 and getting into the Mercedes Mr Kamelski had been driving to check on him.

Sergeant King comforted Mr Kamelski while he waited for firefighters and paramedics to arrive.

A statement released by Mr Kamelski's family read: "Although our remarkable father sadly could not be saved, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all those at the scene.

"In a world where people can be quick to take a photo or video instead of helping a fellow human being, we can take solace in the fact he was surrounded by truly selfless individuals.

"You gave his family a chance to say goodbye.

"A debt that can never be repaid," the statement said.

Think twice call over trying to get rid of waste

PEOPLE in South Staffordshire are being urged to think twice before getting rid of waste from their homes, in an early attempt to clamp down on fly-tipping over the festive season.

With household budgets expected to be stretched this Christmas, South Staffordshire District Council is calling on people to make way for Christmas gifts in their homes by getting rid of unwanted goods, such as toys or electrical equipment, responsibly.

Councillor Roger Lees, deputy leader of the council, said: "We often see a spike in fly-tipping over the Christmas period, and I would like to remind people to make sure they get rid of their unwanted items responsibly.

"One thing we can also do is to ensure our own household or business rubbish is not fly-tipped. Just ask the company you're using to see their waste carrier licence.

"Fly-tipping is not only a crime; it's a costly and unnecessary blight on our communities, and our teams will investigate every allegation made. While always staying safe, people can also play a vital role by reporting any suspicious activity they see and give evidence, as this still remains a tough crime to deter or prosecute."



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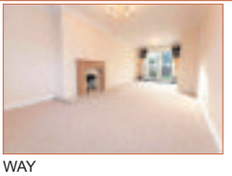
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RAWNSLEY

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- Garage, Gardens

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HEDNESFORD

NEW

BELT ROAD



- Traditional Det Cottage
- Entrance Hallway
- Lounge
- Dining Room/ Reception Two
- Kitchen/Diner
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- Three Bedrooms,
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- Bathroom
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- Bathroom
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NO CHAIN

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Collection of 300 toys to bring joy for youngsters

THE Salvation Army in Hednesford held their annual Christmas Joy service, with their collection of toys being donated to Staffordshire social services.

The toys have been distributed to youngsters across the county in time for Christmas. Rugeley and District Lions Club again offered their assistance, and coordinator Debbie Coburn arranged several drop-off points around the town.

Due to the generous response from the local community, more than 300 new presents were collected, requiring five Lions to transport them to Hednesford.

"Many thanks to all those kind people who contributed," Lions spokesman Ed Rule said.

"The Nativity play by children from the church made an ideal setting for the arrival of the gifts which were ceremoniously placed around the Christmas tree. The Salvation Army and the Lions are both service organisations who aim to meet the needs of their local communities and what better way can there be but to support families and youngsters at Christmas time?"



Toy collection coordinator Debbie Coburn hands some of the toys to Salvation Army Cadet Rob Westwood-Payne with Lions welfare officer Jane Stevenson

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Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) update for Phase One of the High Speed Two railway

HS2 Ltd is consulting on the revised EQIA between Camden Town and Birmingham Curzon Street.

It identifies the potential effects of the new high speed railway on groups of people with protected characteristics along the Phase One route, and outlines what HS2 plans to do about these effects.

We would like to know your views

The consultation is open to everyone. To find out more about the EQIA update, and to submit your response, visit www.gov.uk/hs2 or call 020 7944 4908.

This consultation closes at 11:45pm on Friday 22 January 2016

www.gov.uk/hs2

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Fun is all around in Marti's magic role

BIRMINGHAM Hippodrome's spectacular pantomime Aladdin is a star-studded extravaganza that bills itself as not only the Midlands' best panto but Britain's biggest!

This year's glittering line-up stars Wet Wet Wet singer Marti Pellow as Abanazar, Julian Clary as the Slave of the Ring, and West End star Lee Mead as Aladdin. Returning by popular demand is funnyman Matt Slack, this time as Wishee Washee, and Andrew Ryan plays the Dame for the 25th time as Widow Twankey.

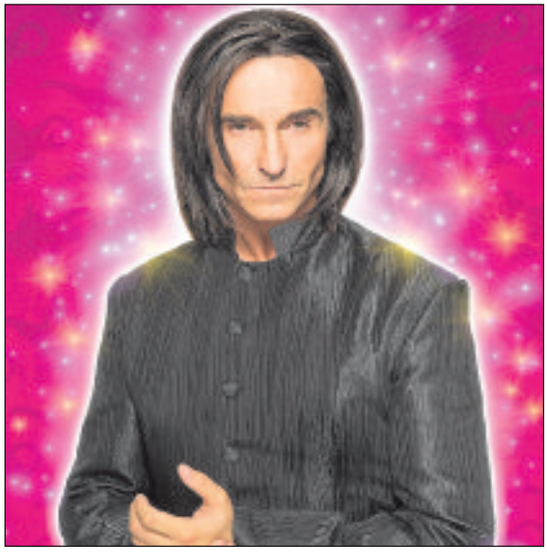
The show is packed with sensational special effects including a magical 3D flying carpet ride, laugh-out-loud comedy, and an Aladdin's cave of lavish sets and costumes.

Julian Clary is an old hand at the panto format. He was at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre last year and will raise laughs with his double entendres.

For Pellow it will be a new experience, but he said he didn't think twice when asked to star, saying: "I have this thing at the end of each year when a lot of my friends in the theatre tell me they're off to do a panto.

"I've never done one before, it had never been on my list. I remember panto as a kid and I loved it; that was in the days of Stanley Baxter.

"Then I was approached by Michael Harrison, the MD of Qdos. We'd worked together on The Witches of Eastwick. He said I'd be perfect for the part of Abanazar. The pantos that Michael put on are all 'wow'. So, to be part of it is a no-brainer.



Pellow talk — 1980s pop star turns panto villain in Brum's big panto show

"I've not been to a panto since my youth. But those memories from my youth were phenomenal. I would be right up at the back at the King's Theatre (Glasgow) and they were magic. It was total escapism. That's the beauty of theatre, that's the beauty of the story of Aladdin."

Aladdin opens on Saturday and continues until January 31. See www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.



Carols and the classics

NO venues throw themselves more wholeheartedly into the Christmas spirit than Birmingham Town Hall and Symphony Hall. Guest hosts including Alan Titchmarsh and Aled Jones (pictured left) will lead the festivities as the city concert venues host a feast of carols and seasonal classical music.

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's Festive Favourites concerts are as much a part of Brum's celebrations as the German Market and the Hippodrome panto. TV personality Alan Titchmarsh is the guest host for three evening concerts on Friday, Sunday and Monday, plus a 3pm matinee on Sunday. Conducted by Simon Halsey and joined by CBSO associates, this will be a joyous start to the season.

On Saturday at Symphony Hall it's Christmas with Aled Jones as the Welsh singer and presenter leads carols, backed by the City of Birmingham Choir and London Concert Orchestra, and special guests. Ghost stories are traditional at this time of year and on Sunday Clive Andrews recreates the night at the Town Hall in December 1853 when Charles Dickens himself read A Christmas Carol to a spellbound audience.

Jonathan Cohan leads a Christmas Carol Singalong at Symphony Hall on Monday at 2.30pm, joined by special guest West End star Louise Dearman. It's Carols by Candlelight when the Mozart Festival Chorus and Orchestra, in period costume, perform on Tuesday evening. White Christmas on Wednesday is a feast of festive music featuring singers Jacinta Whyte and Tim Howard with Capital Voices and London Concert Orchestra at Symphony Hall. The orchestra returns at 2.30pm the next day for Christmas Eve Classics with Birmingham Choral Union and Four Oaks Cluster Choir.

To book see www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 345 0600.

West End performer returns with concert

A FORMER amateur performer from Lichfield who has found success on the London stage is returning to the West Midlands for a special show.

Cameron Sharp, who now lives in London, has appeared in the hit musical Rock of Ages in the West End and on tour but tomorrow (Fri) returns home with an evening of swing, soul and musical theatre tunes at the Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton. He will be accompanied by an 18-piece band, The Infinity Jazz Orchestra. Guest singers and friends will also join him for a performance that's also likely to include some festive sparkle.

Tickets are £18, call 01902 321321.

Justin is back for a brand new Purpose

TEEN pop sensation Justin Bieber has announced two concert dates at Birmingham city centre's Barclaycard Arena next autumn.

The Canadian singer will be performing at the venue on October 17 and 18 with tickets starting from £56.95 (plus fee) up to £135.70.

Tickets were going on general sale from 9am today (Thursday, December 17) from www.theticketfactory.com website.

The 21-year-old star has reached the no1 chart spot in more than 100 countries with his new album Purpose, featuring the massive hit song What Do You Mean.

Blast Off with the Neds at Civic gig

ONE of the best party atmospheres is likely to be at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Saturday when Stourbridge band Ned's Atomic Dustbin have organised the inaugural Kill Your Television Festival, and will play their first new song in 21 years.

The Neds have performed numerous sell-out shows at the venue in recent years. Frontman Jonn Penney said: "Ever since we reformed with all five original members in 2006 we have entertained the idea of writing new songs." The gig will also feature The Wedding Present, The Primitives and Eat, plus a return for legendary indie club night Blast Off.



CHOICE



Claudia Winkleman

Strictly Come Dancing Grand Final
(BBC1, 6.35pm)

The four couples gather one last time for the 2015 Grand Final. Tensions are high as the celebrities and their partners face yet more turns on the dance-floor. Tonight, the contestants will be hoping the judges will be kind with more than just their scores, as Len Goodman, Darcey Bussell, Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli will also be deciding which of the stars' previous routines will be revisited in the first of tonight's dances. For their second performance, the duos must dazzle both the panel and the audience at home with their "show dance". Once all eight routines are complete, the phone lines will open, giving viewers a chance to decide which of the competitors will be progressing through to the final three.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin – Home Comforts at Christmas. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.55** Sports Personality – The Final 12. (R) **1.55 Film:** The Muppets. (2011) Comedy, starring Jason Segel. **3.30** The Hunt. (R) **4.30** Final Score. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Pointless Celebrities.

6.35 Strictly Come Dancing Grand Final. The remaining four couples gather one last time for the 2015 Grand Final. Tensions are high as, after 13 weeks of performances, the celebrities and their professional partners face yet more turns on the dance-floor. Tonight, the contestants will be hoping the judges will be kind with more than just their scores, as Len Goodman, Darcey Bussell, Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli will also be deciding which of the stars' previous routines will be revisited in the first of tonight's dances. For their second performance, the duos must dazzle both the panel and the audience at home with their "show dance". Once all eight routines are complete, the phone lines will open, giving viewers a chance to decide which of the competitors will be progressing through to the final three.

8.00 Casualty. Christmas Eve arrives, and a nervous Cal goes to meet his birth mother. Meanwhile, Dixie learns her superiors are investigating Jess's complaint.

8.50 The National Lottery Live. Frankie Bridge of The Saturdays joins Ore Oduba to push the Lotto button as the all-important winning numbers are revealed.

9.00 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. The final three couples revisit their favourite routines in one last round of performances, before viewers decide which star should be named the champion. Last in the series.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day. Highlights of the latest games, including Manchester United v Norwich City and Everton v Leicester City; National Lottery Update.

11.55 The Apprentice. The five remaining candidates must face the interview process . (R)

12.55 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.00** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Race to Super Bowl 50. (R) **6.50** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **7.45** Africa's Fishing Leopards: Natural World. (R) **8.45 Film:** Underdog. (2007) **10.00 Film:** Bridge to Terabithia. (2007) **11.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **12.00** Best Christmas Bakes Ever. **12.45 Film:** The Bishop's Wife. (1947) Fantasy, starring Cary Grant. **2.30 Film:** Splash! (1984) Romantic fantasy comedy, with Tom Hanks and Daryl Hannah. **4.10** Flog It! **5.00 Film:** Dad's Army. (1971) British comedy, starring Arthur Lowe.

6.35 The Perfect Morecambe & Wise Christmas Special. Compilations each featuring a selection of classic sketches and routines from the comedy duo's shows. (R)

7.05 Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands. Life on Japan's northernmost island Hokkaido, a place where tough animals and ingenious people have adapted to the extremes of the seasons. Last in the series. (R)

8.05 Porridge. Mackay and Barraclough discover Fletch is making booze in his cell and the crafty con seems certain to spend Christmas in solitary. Festive special from 1976, with Ronnie Barker. (R)

8.50 Rudolf Nureyev – Dance to Freedom. Dramatised documentary detailing the story of Rudolf Nureyev, the Soviet ballet dancer who defected to the West in 1961, becoming a living legend in the process. Bolshoi Ballet star Artem Ovcharenko steps into Nureyev's slippers, recreating the Kirov Ballet company's 1961 European tour, which provided the dancer with the opportunity to defect at Paris's Le Bourget airport on June 16.

10.20 QI XL. Jenny Eclair, Johnny Vegas and Bill Bailey join regular panellist Alan Davies for an extended edition of the quiz show, in which host Stephen Fry offers up seasonal merriment.

11.05 The Rise of James Brown: Mr Dynamite. Documentary charting the singer's journey from impoverished beginnings to becoming one of the biggest names in music, and revealing his pivotal role in the civil rights movement. (R)

12.45 Film: SoulBoy. (2010) Drama, starring Martin Compston , Felicity Jones and Nichola Burley. **2.05** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.30** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Super 4. (R) **7.40** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.00** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **8.30** Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Jessie. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.20** ITV News; Weather. **11.30 Film:** The Mirror Crack'd. (1980) **1.35** Celebrity Squares. (R) **2.15** Doc Martin. (R) **3.15** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.10** Regional Programme : Weather. **5.20** ITV News; Weather. **5.35** Keep It in the Family Christmas Special.

6.35 Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey. (2012) Unassuming hobbit Bilbo Baggins is pulled out of his comfortable life when Gandalf the wizard volunteers him for a dangerous quest. He joins a party of dwarves who are on a mission to reclaim their lost homeland, which has been taken over by a dragon. The first part of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on JRR Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen and Richard Armitage.

9.45 The Jonathan Ross Show. The host is given yet another chance to indulge his geek side as he welcomes Harrison Ford to take a seat on the sofa. The veteran Hollywood star will no doubt face a barrage of questions about the making of the highly anticipated Star Wars: The Force Awakens, which hit cinemas on Thursday last week. Also visiting the studio are David Walliams, who is fronting Channel 4's countdown of the nation's favourite children's book this festive season, and Jamie Oliver, whose health-oriented recipe book Everyday Super Food hit shelves back in August. Plus, singer-songwriter Jess Glynne performs.

10.50 ITV News; Weather.

11.05 Film: Notting Hill. (1999) A London bookshop owner falls for a glamorous Hollywood film star, but intrusive media interest makes for a tricky relationship. Romantic comedy, with Hugh Grant, Julia Roberts, Rhys Ifans and Emma Chambers.

1.20 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Great Ethiopian Run 2015. **7.10** Survival of the Fittest. **7.35** Snowman Triathlon. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** The Morning Line. **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Simpsons. (R) **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Ascot and Haydock Park. **4.00** Channel 4 News. **4.10** The Simpsons. (R) **4.40** The Simpsons. **5.10 Film:** Arthur Christmas. (2011) Animated comedy, with the voice of James McAvoy.

7.00 The World's Weirdest Weather. Featuring geysers erupting in the middle of a city, clouds that look like they have been cut with a razor, red rainbows, zombie trees and bridges struck by strong winds that are so fierce the structures start to wobble.

8.00 Film: Star Trek. (2009) The trainee crew members of the starship Enterprise embark on their maiden flight, which pits them against a Romulan commander from the future who is planning a horrific revenge on those he blames for a tragedy in his own time. Sci-fi adventure based on the original TV series, starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Eric Bana, Zoe Saldana and Leonard Nimoy.

10.30 Film: Watchmen. (2009) At the height of the Cold War, former superheroes discover a conspiracy when one of their number is murdered. Comic-book drama, starring Patrick Wilson and Jackie Earle Haley.

1.30 TFI Friday Christmas Special. Chris Evans is joined by co-host Alan Partridge. Guests include James Corden, Jack Whitehall and Lee Mack, and there is music by Sir Tom Jones, Bryan Adams and Lianne La Havas. (R) **2.55** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. While Porsche encourages Cleo to go to the police, Lindsey uses Mercedes's drinking habit to her advantage, and Grace and Darren are shocked when Charlie starts talking. (R) **5.05** Hugh's 3 Good Things. The chefs create dishes using nuts. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall uses walnuts to make baklava, accompanied by ricotta and honeycomb with hazelnuts stirred in. (R) **5.20** Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. Cooking with chocolate. (R) **5.25** Location, Location, Location. Couples search for their ideal properties. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **9.30** The Saturday Show. **11.30 Film:** A Country Christmas Story. (2013) **1.20 Film:** This Christmas. (2007) Comedy drama, starring Delroy Lindo. **3.30 Film:** Angel at Christmas. (2009) Premiere. Comedy drama, starring Kari Hawker. **5.10 Film:** A Boyfriend for Christmas. (2004) Romantic drama, starring Kelli Williams.

6.55 Crackers About Christmas. Eccentric people who are always in the festive holiday spirit, including a man who celebrates Christmas every day and whose daily routine includes posting himself cards, breakfasting on mince pies and sherry, wrapping ante-meridiem presents, dining with guests on roast turkey and watching the Queen's speech. Plus, a woman whose home is full of Christmas baubles, and a man who has set up his own school for Santas. (R)

7.55 Michael Buble's Christmas Songbook. The Canadian crooner sings Christmas classics, joined on stage in Vancouver by Rod Stewart, Blake Shelton, Carly Rae Jepsen, Elmo and Oscar the Grouch. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches, including Brighton & Hove Albion v Middlesbrough and Rotherham v Hull City in the Championship. Plus, all the goals from Leagues One and Two, where match-ups included Coventry City v Oldham Athletic and Hartlepool United v Plymouth Argyle. There is also a round-up of the main talking points, and interviews with a selection of players and managers.

10.30 Britain's Favourite Abba Songs. A countdown of the Swedish pop group's 20 most popular songs, with celebrity fans including Jane McDonald and Liz McClarnon introducing their favourite clips.

11.55 Abba: Live in Concert. The Swedish band in concert during their six-night residence at London's Wembley Arena in November 1979, featuring hits including Voulez-Vous, Dancing Queen and Waterloo. (R)

1.10 SuperCasino. **3.10** Meet the Psychopaths. (R) **4.00** Benefits Britain: Life on the Dole. (R) **4.50** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Don't Tell the Bride **8.00** Top Gear Botswana Special **9.00 Film:** Enemy of the State (1998) **11.05** Family Guy **1.20** The Mighty Boosh

BBC Four

7.00 Empire of the Seas: How the Navy Forged the Modern World **8.00** The Golden Age of Steam Railways **9.00** The Bridge **11.00** 10 Things You Didn't Know About Earthquakes **12.00** 10 Things You Didn't Know About Tsunamis

ITV2

11.20 Scorpion **12.15** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! **1.15 Film:** Mr Magorium's Wonder Emporium (2007) **3.10 Film:** Santa Baby (2006) **5.00** Merry Christmas Mr Bean **5.35 Film:** Ella Enchanted (2004) **7.25 Film:** Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993) **9.00 Film:** The Bourne Supremacy (2004) **11.10** Celebrity Juice: Bestest Bits 2015 Part 1 **12.10** Through the Christmas Keyhole **1.15** Tricked **2.10** Viral Tap **2.45 Film:** Baby Mama (2008) **4.25** The Almost Impossible Gameshow

ITV3

11.50 Film: Swallows and Amazons (1974) **1.40** By Royal Appointment **2.50 Film:** The Queen (2006) **4.55 Film:** Columbo: It's All in the Game (1993) **6.55** Rosemary & Thyme **8.00** Housewife, 49 **10.00** Lewis **12.05** A Touch of Frost **2.10 Film:** Murder on the Orient Express (1974) **4.20** Wycliffe **5.15** On the Buses

ITV4

12.05 Storage Wars: New York **1.05** Storage Wars: Texas **2.05 Film:** Jeremiah Johnson (1972) **4.20** Fifth Gear **5.20** Formula E: Sound of the Future **6.00** Live FIA Formula E Championship. The Punta del Este ePrix. **8.30 Film:** Jackie Chan's First Strike (1996) **10.15 Film:** Rambo III (1988) **12.20 Film:** Police Academy (1984) **2.15 Film:** Quadrophenia (1979)

E4

12.00 The Goldbergs **1.00** The Big Bang Theory **3.00 Film:** Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (2004) **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** The Inbetweeners Movie (2011) **11.00** The Inbetweeners Top 10 Moments **12.00** The Inbetweeners **2.15** The Inbetweeners Top 10 Moments **3.10** How to... Get Stinking Rich **3.35** How I Met Your Mother **4.20** The Mindy Project **4.40** Revenge

Film4

11.00 Arrietty (2010) **1.00** A Knight's Tale (2001) **3.40** The Longest Day (1962) **7.10** Men in Black II (2002) **9.00** Life of Pi (2012) **11.25** WolfCop (2014) **1.00** Thirst (2009) **3.45** Close

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CHOICE



Kara Tointon

The Sound of Music Live! (ITV, 7.30pm)

You can't beat a bit of The Sound of Music at Christmas - the film version is sure to pop up in the schedules at some point, but ITV is really pushing the boat out by launching a live version of the musical to help celebrate the movie's 50th anniversary. Perhaps the biggest is surprise is the identity of the lead actress - Kara Tointon, who plays novice nun-turned-governess. We know she can act and her dance skills were revealed when she won Strictly Come Dancing in 2010, but can she sing? We'll find out tonight when she takes to the stage alongside West End and Downton Abbey star Julian Ovenden, who portrays Captain Von Trapp. Katherine Kelly, Alexander Armstrong and Mel Giedroyc also appear.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Baroness Brady. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15 Film:** Rise of the Guardians. (2012) Animated adventure, with the voice of Chris Pine. **2.40** Merry Madagascar. (R) **3.05 Film:** Toy Story 3. (2010) Animated adventure, with the voices of Tom Hanks and Tim Allen. **4.45** The Christmas Big Sing. **5.25** BBC News. **5.40** Regional Programme. **5.50** Countryfile: Cornish Coastal Christmas.

6.50 Sports Personality of the Year 2015. Gary Lineker, Clare Balding and Gabby Logan present this year's ceremony live from the SSE Arena in Belfast, where the successor to Lewis Hamilton will be crowned. Hamilton himself is among the 12 contenders, and will be hoping to land back-to-back wins at this ceremony, having delivered another Formula 1 world title in 2015 to maintain his recent dominance of the sport. The other nominees are world champion athletes Jessica Ennis-Hill, Mo Farah and Greg Rutherford, Davis Cup hero Andy Murray, footballer Lucy Bronze, newly crowned world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury, cyclists Chris Froome and Lizzie Armitstead, swimmer Adam Peaty, gymnast Max Whitlock and former Leeds Rhinos captain Kevin Sinfield – the first-ever candidate from rugby league. In addition, awards will be handed out in categories such as Team of the Year, Coach of the Year and Unsung Hero, and the Helen Rollason Award will be bestowed upon someone who epitomises courage and has the ability to inspire others.

9.00 The Apprentice. The finalists must launch their business in the final task, including creating a brand and unveiling their campaign to an audience of industry experts. Last in the series.

11.00 BBC News.

11.20 Regional Programme.

11.30 Have I Got a Bit More News for You. Compilation of the satirical quiz, looking back at the big news events of 2015, with team captains Ian Hislop and Paul Merton, and guest hosts and panellists. Last in the series.

12.10 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Big Dreams Small Spaces. (R) **7.15** Countryfile. (R) **8.15** An Island Parish: Falklands. (R) **8.45** Natural World: Beavers Behaving Badly. (R) **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.15** Simply Nigella: Christmas Special. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Hi-de-Hi! (R) **1.45** Equestrian: Olympia. **4.30** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em. (R) **5.20** Flog It!

6.25 The Good Life. Margo and Jerry are forced to spend Christmas with Tom and Barbara. Seasonal special from 1977. (R)

6.50 Christmas University Challenge. New series. Jeremy Paxman chairs the first in a series of special festive edition of the quiz, with famous graduates of University College London and the University of Birmingham.

7.20 To The Manor Born: 25th Anniversary Special. Christmas revival from 2007. Audrey prepares to celebrate her wedding anniversary, but finds the event threatened by secrets from her husband's past and her feckless nephew. (R)

8.20 Film: Safe Haven. (2013) Premiere. A woman trying to make a fresh start in a coastal town realises she must confront the dark past she is running from. Romantic drama, with Julianne Hough and Josh Duhamel.

10.10 Live at the Apollo Christmas Special 2015. Nina Conti hosts a special festive edition of the stand-up show from the Hammersmith Apollo, featuring Tanyalee Davis, Hal Cruttenden and Josh Widdicombe. Last in the series.

10.55 Family Guy. Peter, Joe, Cleveland and Quagmire help throw Jesus an important birthday party. Animation following the misadventures of America's disaster-prone Griffin family. (R)

11.15 The Javone Prince Show. The actor pokes fun at the more ridiculous elements of modern life via stand-up performances, comedy sketches and music. (R)

11.45 Country Strife: Abz on the Farm. Former boy band member Abz Love and his girlfriend Vicky Fallon try to start their own smallholding in Wales. (R)

12.15 Special Forces – Ultimate Hell Week. (R) **2.15** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.15** Holby City. (R) **4.15** James Martin – Home Comforts at Christmas. (R) **4.55** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.30** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Super 4. (R) **7.40** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.00** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **8.30** Lego DC Comics: Batman Be-Leaguered. (R) **9.00** Jessie. **9.25** FIA Formula E Championship. **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.20** ITV News; Weather. **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** The Unforgettable Dick Emery. (R) **1.00** Doc Martin. (R) **3.00** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.00** Tipping Point for Text Santa. (R)

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 Jekyll and Hyde. Robert has no wish to find the monster that is killing wealthy young men, but the trail is too compelling to resist. It leads him to a fight with a beautiful vampire who shocks him with the news that she's his sister, Olalla. She also tells him Dance is alive and being rebuilt by eel creatures. Robert is suspicious of a trap and sets a test – if she can turn into a Jekyll he'll believe her. Fantasy adventure, starring Tom Bateman and Wallis Day.

7.30 The Sound of Music Live! Popular musical The Sound of Music is brought to life on soundstages at London's Three Mills Studio, in a live TV dramatisation of the timeless story of Maria and the von Trapp family. Based on the original, the drama will include classic songs such as How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria, Edelweiss, Do-Re-Mi, My Favourite Things, Climb Ev'ry Mountain, and the title song. Starring Kara Tointon, Julia Ovenden, Katherine Kelly and Alexander Armstrong.

10.05 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Film: Love Actually. (2003) Interlinked tales of several people in search of love. Richard Curtis's romantic comedy, with Hugh Grant, Martine McCutcheon, Emma Thompson, Colin Firth, Bill Nighy and Liam Neeson.

12.45 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 The King of Queens. (R) **6.45** The King of Queens. (R) **7.10** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.25 Film:** Hachi: A Dog's Tale. (2009) Fact-based family drama, starring Richard Gere. **3.15 Film:** The Addams Family. (1991) Black comedy, starring Anjelica Huston. **5.10** Channel 4 News. **5.30** Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas. (R)

6.00 Film: Home Alone. (1990) A boy has to fend for himself when he is accidentally left behind after his family jets off to Paris for Christmas. The youngster initially enjoys his freedom, but is soon forced to resort to ingenious booby traps to defend the family home from two dim-witted burglars. Comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern, John Heard, Catherine O'Hara and John Candy.

8.00 Bear Goes Wild with Barack Obama. Bear Grylls is joined by the US president for his latest adventure. The pair go on a trek across the Alaskan wilderness, travelling through dense forest and glacial outwash to visit the Exit Glacier, where they observe the effects of climate change first hand. Along the way, they climb trees to gather berries and cook salmon on a campfire, sharing their thoughts on family, fears and faith.

9.00 Homeland. Carrie finds herself with a lead to follow. Penultimate episode of the fifth series of the thriller following a team of CIA agents battling terrorists and problems in their personal lives. Claire Danes stars.

10.00 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)

11.00 Film: Four Christmases. (2008) A couple struggle to make it through four family Christmases on the same day as they see each of their divorced parents in turn. Comedy, with Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon.

12.40 Film: Airplane! (1980) Spoof disaster movie, starring Robert Hays. **2.10** Alan Carr: Chatty Man. (R) **3.05** The Undateables: Two Weddings and a Baby. (R) **3.55** Four in a Bed. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Tickety Toc. (R) **6.55** Zack and Quack. **7.05** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.25** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.40** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.05** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.30** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.45** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.55** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.10** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Football League Tonight. (R) **12.00 Film:** Surf's Up. (2007) Animated comedy, with the voice of Jeff Bridges. **1.35 Film:** The Christmas Switch. (2014) Fantasy, starring Brian Krause and Cedric Smith. **3.20 Film:** Christmas in the City. (2013) Premiere. Drama, starring Ashley Williams. **5.05 Film:** Pinocchio. (1940) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Dick Jones.

6.45 5 News Weekend.

6.50 Film: Hellboy II: The Golden Army. (2008) The demon superhero, aided by a team from the Bureau of Paranormal Research and Defence, leads the fight against renegade elf Prince Nuada who is intent on reawakening an unstoppable robot army and bringing about the demise of mankind. Action fantasy sequel directed by Guillermo del Toro, starring Ron Perlman, Selma Blair, Doug Jones and Luke Goss. Edited for language and violence.

9.00 Film: War of the Worlds. (2005) A divorced father's rare weekend with his two estranged children descends into horror when alien war machines rise from beneath Earth and begin to systematically destroy every human being in their path – leaving the man with the dangerous task of getting his kids to safety. Steven Spielberg's sci-fi thriller, based on HG Wells' novel, with Tom Cruise, Dakota Fanning, Justin Chatwin, Miranda Otto and Tim Robbins.

11.10 Britain's Favourite Christmas Songs. A countdown of songs guaranteed to make any Christmas party go with a swing, including classics by the Jackson 5, Jona Lewie, Band Aid, the Pogues and Kirsty MacColl, and Slade. (R)

2.05 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming. **4.00** House Doctor.(R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 First Flight **7.10 Film:** G-Force (2009) **8.30** Don't Tell the Bride – Christmas on Ice **9.30** Top Gear: Polar Challenge **10.35** Russell Howard's Good News Extra **11.15** Family Guy **12.00** American Dad! **12.45** Josh **1.15** The Mighty Boosh

BBC Four

7.00 Blood and Gold: The Making of Spain with Simon Sebag Montefiore **8.00** Westminster Abbey **9.00** Nat King Cole: Afraid of the Dark **10.30** Nina Simone & Me with Laura Mvula **11.00** Bruce Springsteen: The Ties That Bind **11.55** Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band: Live From The River Tour 1980

ITV2

11.45 Keep It in the Family Christmas Special **12.50** You've Been Framed at Christmas! **1.20 Film:** Peter Pan (2003) **3.30 Film:** Beethoven's Christmas Adventure (2011) **5.20** Catchphrase Christmas Special **6.25** The X Factor Winner's Story 2015 **7.30** You've Been Framed at Christmas! **9.00 Film:** The Bourne Ultimatum (2007) **11.15** Celebrity Juice: Christmas Special **12.00** Release the Hounds: Jingle Hell II **1.05** Tricked **2.00 Film:** Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant (2009)

ITV3

11.50 Film: Columbo: It's All in the Game (1993) **1.50 Film:** Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (1971) **3.55** Clash of the Santas **5.55** Michael Bublé: At Home for Christmas **7.30** Lewis **9.30** Inspector Morse **11.45** A Touch of Frost **1.50** Wycliffe **2.45** On the Buses **3.10** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale

ITV4

11.20 The Car Chasers **11.50** Pawn Stars **1.35 Film:** No Name on the Bullet (1959) **3.15 Film:** The Appaloosa (1966) **5.20 Film:** Ice Cold in Alex (1958) **8.00** The Celebrity Chase **9.00 Film:** The Interpreter (2005) **11.40 Film:** Tin Cup (1996) **2.25 Film:** Spider (2002)

E4

12.30 Couples Come Dine with Me **2.35** The Big Bang Theory **6.25 Film:** The Twilight Saga: New Moon (2009) **9.00 Film:** The Inbetweeners 2 (2014) **11.00** The Inbetweeners Go Global **12.05** The Inbetweeners **2.20** The Inbetweeners Go Global **3.15** How to Be a Grown Up **3**

Film4

11.00 Porco Rosso (1992) **1.00** Parental Guidance (2012) **3.05** Bride Wars (2009) **4.50** Evolution (2001) **6.50** Men in Black 3 (2012) **9.00** Iron Man 2 (2010) **11.25** Daredevil (2003) **1.30** 10 Years (2011) **3.40** Close

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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
White Christmas, Channel 4, 11.50am
Two nightclub entertainers stage a series of shows to save an old friend's winter resort with the help of a talented singing sister act. Musical, with Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye. (1954)

TUESDAY
Shrek the Third, BBC1, 3.50pm
The bad-tempered ogre finds himself in the unwelcome position of being next in line for the throne. Animated comedy, with the voices of Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, Justin Timberlake, Eddie Murphy, Antonio Banderas and Rupert Everett. (2007)

WEDNESDAY
Bridget Jones's Diary, ITV, 10.45pm
A single woman begins a new year with resolutions to find love, quit her bad habits and take a step up the career ladder. Romantic comedy based on Helen Fielding's novel, starring Renee Zellweger, Hugh Grant and Colin Firth. (2001)



Bridget Jones's Diary, Wednesday, ITV, 10.45pm

CHRISTMAS EVE
It's a Wonderful Life, Channel 4, 2.15pm
AA suicidal small-town businessman is visited by an angel who tries to change his mind by showing him the good he has done. Fantasy drama, starring James Stewart and Donna Reed. (1946)

CHRISTMAS DAY
The Muppet Christmas Carol, Channel 4, 1.45pm
A miser is encouraged to mend his ways at Christmas when three spirits show him his past, present and what the future holds. Puppet comedy, with Michael Caine and Steven Mackintosh. (1992)
The Wizard of Oz, Channel 5, 3.10pm
Youngster Dorothy Gale is whisked over the rainbow by a tornado into the magical land of Oz, where she inadvertently kills a wicked witch – incurring the wrath of another. Setting out to find the wizard who can show her a way home, she is joined on her journey by a scarecrow, a tin man and a cowardly lion, who all hope their own wishes will be granted. Musical fantasy, with Judy Garland, Ray Bolger, Jack Haley, Bert Lahr and Frank Morgan. (1939)

The birth of a comedy with an army of fans

Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler? Whenever the crusty old voice of Bud Flanagan can be heard singing that line, you know that Dad's Army is about to start and what will follow is approximately 25 minutes of mayhem, one-liners and catchphrases from Captain Mainwaring, Sergeant Wilson, Corporal Jones and the rest of the platooon.

Ah yes, those catchphrases... Even now, sentences such as, "You stupid boy," "I'm going to get you Napoleon," "We're doomed" and, of course, "Don't panic!" are still well known – which is probably down to the fact that the Beeb always seems to be repeating the show.

It's actually been 47 years since the boys first donned their uniforms and 38 since they hung them up again, but those nine years in between were full of humour which hasn't dated one little bit.

There's an old saying for authors: Write what you know. Jimmy Perry proved he wasn't a "stupid boy" when he did just that and, along with writing partner David Croft, turned his World War Two Home Guard experiences into Dad's Army.

"We wrote the show together and it became this huge success," says Perry, with a hint of surprise still in his voice. "I always thought it was a good idea but it totally overwhelmed us. I think the secret was that everything was right. It was one of those rare things. The cast was right, the time and the subject was right."

However, not everybody was as enamoured with the idea – or the actors taking part – as Perry. And now, in this drama, viewers can learn more about how the sitcom was born and eventually made it to our screens against the odds.

The BBC has a good track record when it comes to producing 'making-of' dramas. The Curse of Steptoe, The Road to Coronation Street and An Adventure in Space and Time all received critical acclaim, so there's every reason to believe that the latest in the genre will be just as enthralling. The timing is good too – Dad's Army remains a mainstay of the BBC schedule and a revamped film version is due for release in February.

Paul Ritter and Richard Dormer play Perry and Croft respectively, and the drama takes us from when Perry had the initial idea in 1967 to the broadcast of the first episode a year later.

John Sessions and Julian Sands take the key roles of Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier; it's hard to imagine anybody playing the characters those venerable old actors took, but Captain Mainwaring was originally offered to Jon Pertwee, while Le Mesurier only accepted the role of Sgt Wilson because the series was going to be filmed in Norfolk, a county he loved.

Sadly, most of the original cast are no longer with us – only Ian Lavender and Frank Williams (Private Pike and Rev Timothy Farthing respectively) remain. Croft also passed away in 2011.

"I feel a tremendous sense of warmth and sadness that most of those involved are no longer with us," says Perry. "But I also have a sense of pride that I created such a show."

Sarah Alexander, Sally Phillips and Keith Allen also star.



We're Doomed! The Dad's Army Story, Tuesday, BBC2, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The John Bishop Christmas Show
BBC1, 9pm
The Liverpudlian comedian returns for his third all-singing, all-dancing, festive extravaganza and is joined on stage at the Lyceum Theatre in London's West End by a selection of the most exciting names in music and comedy. The line-up features music from Australian pop star and actress Kylie Minogue, chart-topping singer-songwriter Jess Glynne and 2009 X Factor runner-up and TV presenter Olly Murs, while the laughs are supplied by comedians Sarah Millican, Danny Bhoy, Tom Allen and Andy Askins.

Bafta Celebrates Downton Abbey
ITV, 9pm
Jonathan Ross hosts a star-studded event at London's Richmond Theatre honouring the ITV drama ahead of its final episode on Christmas Day. There are reports from behind the scenes with cast and crew to provide an insight into one of the worldēs most popular shows, while creator Julian Fellowes takes to the stage to chat about its origins and secrets. Maggie Smith and Hugh Bonneville perform a specially written sketch, there are performances by Kiri Te Kanawa and Julian Ovenden, and Julie Walters presents the award to Fellowes and the cast and crew.

TUESDAY
Luther
BBC1, 9pm
With the eponymous detective dogged by ghosts from his past, a cold case might be the key to unlocking a mystery that's tormenting him. Meanwhile, with the cannibalistic serial killer still at large, Benny's hacking skills have revealed a list of hundreds of potential victims. Realising it's all part of a macabre end game, the crime buster is forced to put himself and new colleague Emma into the heart of danger to try and stop the killer. Idris Elba and Laura Haddock head the cast.

WEDNESDAY
Prey
ITV, 9pm
As Murdoch continues with the search for his daughter, he is forced into one last extraordinary mission before Lucy can be freed. But, as a wanted man, it is a near-impossible task, and he must fight to get her to safety before the relentless Reinhardt catches her prey. Concluding instalment of the thriller, following the story of a prison officer who is forced on the run with a young female prisoner when his daughter is kidnapped. Starring Philip Glenister, Rosie Cavaliero, MyAnna Buring and Nathan Stewart-Jarrett. Last in the series.



Prey, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm

CHRISTMAS EVE
Peter Kay: 20 Years of Funny
BBC1, 9.05pm
It is nearly 20 years since Peter Kay was named North West Comedian of the Year 1996, beating the likes of Johnny Vegas to the title at a show hosted by Dave Spikey. This one-off hour-long programme looks back at the much-loved comedian and actor's life from his childhood growing up in Bolton, to the places and people who have influenced him. It reveals how Peter began his journey into the world of comedy and his eventual rise to become a household name, playing to a record-breaking 1.2 million fans on his The Tour That Doesn't Tour Tour.

CHRISTMAS DAY
Downton Abbey – The Finale
ITV, 8.45pm
Julian Fellowes bids farewell to the Crawleys with one last festive special, catching up with the Abbey's residents at the tail-end of 1925. Mary endeavours to build bridges, but Edith's secret continues to pose a threat. As Henry settles into the role of husband, scars left by Charlie's death are slow to heal, while Carson struggles to come to terms with developments that prove even he is not invulnerable to change. Spratt's moonlighting venture is threatened by the conniving of Denker, and Daisy may have missed her chance with an admirer.

Our Cilla
ITV, 10.45pm
The death of singer and TV presenter Cilla Black in August 2015 shocked the showbusiness community. In this programme, stars including Ringo Starr, Cliff Richard, Elaine Paige, Christopher Biggins, Paul O'Grady and Lynda La Plante join members of the entertainer's family and other close friends to reveal the woman behind the screen persona. Alongside rare interviews and archive footage, the candid, humorous and surprising insights of the people who knew her best chart the journey of a woman who broke boundaries, both in terms of class and gender.



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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

14	24	16	22	■	24	17	14	20	11	15	20	13
2	■	22	■	■	21	■	■	4	■	10	■	20
16	■	26	12	3	13	13	21	20	■	3	■	21
11	3	15	■	■	■	3	■	■	26	2	10	20
8	■	20	■	3	18	2	3	■	■	25	■	15
■	3	9	20	1	■	22	■	23	21	3	6	20
■	■	■	■	21	■	15	■	3	■	■	■	■
20	22	26	2	20	■	21	■	12	20	9	15	■
22	■	3	■	■	14	20	10	4	■	2	■	25
14	16	19	20	■	■	26	■	■	■	17	24	3
24	■	16 I	■	17	3	26	5	7	2	21	■	14
16	■	22 N	■	2	■	■	2	■	■	16	■	24
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1	14
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12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
F	M	Q	B	P	G	R	E	X	H	D	L	A
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	J	C	N	Z	W	O	Y	I	T	S	U	V

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

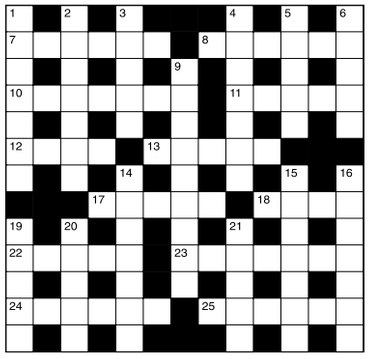
Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Make it possible to be lean? (6)
8. This stuff does have importance (6)
10. The team having batted are not in the pavilion (7)
11. Dodge a chasm (5)
12. Not one of the nonentities (4)
13. Filched a wrap (5)
17. Famous king was dunderhead - and greedy (5)
18. See 2 Down
22. Stale to the smallest degree (5)
23. Letters for sending to detached fort? (7)
24. Street abounding with contention (6)
25. His products presumably have the edge (6)

Down

1. About hearty echo (7)
2 & 18Ac. By which the chairman sees the actors are elected? (7,4)
3. It's clear learner is in distress (5)
4. Competent enough to do better than clever people (7)
5. Was a candidate, but didn't have a seat (5)
6. She's out of the singles now (5)
9. His trial goes over one's head (4,5)
14. Dog finds mother unyielding (7)
15. Spectacle? (7)
16. Correspondence from landlords? (7)
19. Those who study social division (5)
20. Annoy Henry (5)
21. A drink for the overweight? (5)



Quick Clues:

Across

7. Go back (6)
8. Tremble (6)
10. Speech (7)
11. Counterfeit (5)
12. Cudgel (4)
13. Corn (5)
17. Chute (5)
18. Win (4)
22. Proverb (5)
23. Interpret (7)
24. Ministers (6)
25. Glad (6)

Down

1. Crops (7)
2. Conceited (5-2)
3. Venomous snake (5)
4. Excess (7)
5. Prevent (5)
6. Avarice (5)
9. Licentious (9)
14. Feathers (7)
15. Nonpareil (7)
16. Unity (7)
19. Slap (5)
20. Drive out (5)
21. Reel (5)

Sudoku

	4				9	7	2	
		9						5
3			5	6		4		
	3			9				4
9			6	4	8		3	1
		4		1			6	
		8		5				6
5					6	1		
	6	1	2				9	

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

5	4	3	1	6	7	9	8	2
2	9	7	4	3	8	6	5	1
1	6	8	5	2	9	3	4	7
9	3	2	6	8	5	1	7	4
7	8	5	3	1	4	2	6	9
4	1	6	7	9	2	8	3	5
6	2	4	8	7	1	5	9	3
3	5	1	9	4	6	7	2	8
8	7	9	2	5	3	4	1	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Backs; 4 Pulls up; 8 Air one's; 9 Views; 10 Toot; 11 Pickling; 13 Cuff; 14 Pool; 16 Obedient; 17 Esau; 20 Naomi; 21 Servant; 22 Settled; 23 Wages. Down: 1 Beat the bounds; 2 Cargo; 3 Sink; 4 Pistil; 5 Love-knot; 6 Special; 7 Post-graduates; 12 Official; 13 Cherot; 15 Unused; 18 Slang; 19 Crow. QUICK - Across: 1 Ocean; 4 Descend; 8 Jealous; 9 Amiss; 10 Chef; 11 Domineer; 13 Eros; 14 Just; 16 Nauseous; 17 Main; 20 Bravo; 21 Inexact; 22 Element; 23 Dread. Down: 1 Objectionable; 2 Evade; 3 Noon; 4 Despot; 5 Spacious; 6 Evident; 7 Discriminated; 12 Lose hope; 13 Emulate; 15 Quaint; 18 Aware; 19 Herd.

Thinking space

Quiz

1. Which Biblical book mentions 'A land flowing with milk and honey'?
2. In which Shakespeare play does Caliban appear?
3. In which year did Canada adopt a maple leaf emblem for its flag?
4. Which Nazi leader was 'The Butcher of Lyon'?
5. How old was outlaw Clyde Barrow when he died?
6. When is the first day of Ramadan in 2016?
7. Who wrote Northanger Abbey?
8. To which country did Alexander Graham Bell emigrate in 1870?
9. What nationality was composer Dvorak?
10. With which of the arts would you associate Sir Alfred Munnings?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Swan-upping; 2 David Copperfield; 3 Egypt; 4 A church; 5 Hyde Park; 6 A bird; 7 Alcazar; 8 Torino; 9 George Harrison; 10 Poland.

Niner: LEGATIONS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

2467 gives a school,
98457 gives a school subject,
1352732 gives another school subject.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Lexus RX gets five stars for safety in NCAP test

By Anthony Martyn

The new Lexus RX has achieved the top five-star ranking in independent Euro NCAP crash testing. The results also mark the highest test score for pedestrian protection yet achieved by any SUV – large or small.

Euro NCAP made special mention of the 79 per cent recorded by the RX in pedestrian impact testing, which included a maximum points score for leg and pelvic region protection and a notably high result for head protection.

In fact, the new RX goes even further to reduce the risk of accidents with pedestrians, beyond the boundaries of Euro NCAP's current research.

Its Lexus Safety System+ package of active safety and driver assistance features (provided as standard on all RX versions) includes a Pre-Crash Safety system with a pedestrian detection function.

This means that, across a wide range of speeds, the RX will recognise the risk of a collision with a pedestrian in its path, alert the driver and prepare the brakes to deliver maximum stopping power.

And should the driver fail to take action, autonomous emergency braking will be triggered.

Performance

Euro NCAP will begin assessing this type of system during next year, so at present it has no impact in the new RX's overall performance.

Lexus Safety System+ also provides:

- Adaptive Cruise Control, which helps keep the car a safe distance from the car in front, adjusting to even very low speeds in busy traffic.
- Lane Departure Alert/Lane Keep Assist, which monitors lane markings and warns the driver if the RX moves out of lane without the turn indicators being used, adding brief weight to the steering to help a return to the correct course.
- Road Sign Assist, which recognises principal motorway and major road warning and command signs and repeats them on the driver's multi-information display.
- Automatic High Beam, which picks up the lights of oncoming traffic and vehicles ahead and automatically switches to and from high beam to maintain the best forward illumination without the risk of dazzling others (the more sophisticated Adaptive High-beam System on Premier grade models adjusts the pattern of high beam lighting).

Panoramic

The new RX also offers a blind spot mitor, rear cross traffic alert and a 360-degree panoramic view monitor, to help the driver achieve a true all-round view of the car's surroundings and nearby vehicles and hazards.

A sway warning detects erratic driving behaviour indicating driver drowsiness or inattention and prompts an alert that driver might want to take a break from the wheel.

The vehicle's excellent impact performance can be credited to the exceptional strength of its bodyshell. This makes extensive use of strong but lightweight high-tensile steel and a design that's effective in absorbing impact forces and channelling them away from the cabin.

Advanced laser screw welding and adhesive bonding techniques add to the car's high rigidity and robustness, qualities that also contribute to its stable and rewarding handling.

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Seat's baby Ibiza gets a makeover and update

By Matt Joy

Seat's Ibiza has done a sterling job of bringing buyers into the brand in what is a cut-throat sector of the market. It's also managed to look youthful and sharp, despite having been around since 2008. Now it's time for the Ibiza's second facelift, and it's on the receiving end of plenty of new kit.

The outside gets a mild makeover, while inside there's new materials and a re-sculpted dashboard which helps boost the quality feel alongside greater personalisation options and increased technology. There are also some new engines to choose from and tweaked suspension aimed at improving the ride quality.

It's a sign of confidence from Seat that they have chosen to change so little of the Ibiza's exterior. Compared to the 2012 model, the exterior is distinguished only by LED daytime running lights, LED tail lights and some new alloy wheel options, but otherwise it's the same attractive shape. It's the bold lines that make it stand out from its more conservative rivals, and it's still the best looking car in the class, which no doubt helps its youthful image.

Small cars certainly aren't as small as they used to be, but the Ibiza strikes a good balance between a compact exterior and a cabin that is usefully sized. In the front there's a good driving position, legroom and headroom are good enough even for taller folk, and it's not a narrow cabin either. In the back, it's fine for kids and you can squeeze adults in there too, but three across the back requires a degree of intimacy.

Boot space remains at 292 litres which isn't the outright biggest in the class, but it's a good shape and can cope with reasonable demands.

The pick of the new engine line up is 1.0-litre three cylinder, which is now available in turbocharged form with two power outputs, but the larger 1.2 TFSI tested here is still an excellent device even in the lower 90PS form. Quiet and torquey, it behaves much like a larger capacity engine and there's very little to betray the fact that it is turbocharged. It delivers some impressive numbers too; 0-62mph in 10.7 seconds and 57.6mpg combined too.

Elsewhere, the Ibiza switches to electric power steering, and while that does mean the steering is light and a little less feelsome than before, it only takes one corner to realise it is pleasingly accurate and makes for a fun car to drive. The retuned suspension smooths out bigger road imperfections well too.

In this Connect model, you get the full infotainment experience with Apple Car Play, or MirrorLink depending on your choice of smartphone, which seamlessly displays a select number of your phone apps on screen.

The upgraded speaker system for a modest £155 is a worthwhile investment too.

Even though the Connect model isn't at the top of the Ibiza tree, it's still generously equipped. The key element is the five-inch infotainment system including navigation and DAB, but there's also 16-inch alloy wheels, aluminium sill trims and tasteful cloth seating. All Ibizas get air conditioning, a version of the touchscreen, a USB port, Bluetooth and air conditioning too.

The Ibiza is an ideal car for the younger generation with its impressive kit list and smart exterior, but its appeal is much broader than that.

It's a cinch to drive and is a doddle park, so it would suit older folks too, and there's enough space in the rear for two children in comfort.

The other big plus point is the range of very frugal petrol engines, some of which manage to break the crucial 100g/km barrier.

This car summed up in a single word: Balearic.

If this car was a: drink it would be a mojito; sharp and tasty.

TESTED

Seat Ibiza Connect 1.2 TSI 90PS 5-door, £14,620

Engine:1.2-litre unit producing 89bhp and 118lb/ft of torque

Transmission: Five-speed manual gearbox driving the front wheels

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New Fiat 124 Spider has wraps taken off



Almost 50 years since the original was introduced, the Fiat 124 Spider is back.

True to its celebrated nameplate, the all-new Fiat 124 Spider brings classic Italian styling and pure driving pleasure to a new generation, with its powerful turbo-charged petrol engine, sophisticated suspension and traditional rear-wheel drive layout.

Designed at Centro Stile in Turin, Italy, the new Fiat 124 Spider takes its inspiration from the 1966 original, not only in terms of its proportions and stance but also in terms of its detailing. A horizontal line emerges from the front wing, kicking up over the rear haunch and flowing toward the tail lamp, aping the distinctive bodywork of the original car, while the style and position of the LED headlamps, and the hexagonal upper grille, both draw heavily from the details of the classic roadster.

The bonnet of the new sports car also emulates the twin power domes of the second generation Fiat 124 Spider while the rear view is defined by two main features: the 'seagull' wings, the upper surface of which fall inward toward the decklid, and the sharp horizontal tail lamps, which incorporate a new Fiat stylistic sign of body-coloured inserts launched with the new Fiat 500. An integrated rear spoiler enhances the aerodynamic performance of the new Fiat 124 Spider, while twin exhaust outlets underline the performance capability of the engine.

The interior of the new Fiat 124 Spider, in keeping with the exterior, mixes Italian style with the classic ingredients of a driver-focused roadster. The low-slung seats are comprised of a lightweight net structure with a unique foam shape and are trimmed in premium upholstery.

Attention to detail extends even as far as the operation of the soft top, with spring-assisted opening and closing – eliminating the need for a power assist system – and automatic window lowering and raising when the header-rail lock levers are operated. Even the seat structure is designed with the roof operation in mind – the narrow shoulder bolster allows the upper body to move freely, facilitating rapid and unrestricted roof operation from the driver's seat.

With the roof retracted and side windows rolled down, the aerodynamics around the rearward-mounted windscreen frame have been optimised to guide the wind above the heads of occupants and towards the rear of the car, minimising both the amount of wind striking occupants directly and drafts buffeting from behind. Particular care has also been given to the reduction of noise, vibration and harshness.

Under the bonnet lies Fiat's venerable 1.4-litre MultiAir Turbo engine producing 140hp and 240Nm of torque, driving the rear wheels for the first time via a lightweight, quick-shifting six-speed manual transmission, specially optimised for this high torque output.

The new Spider offers a range of technologies to enhance the driving experience while also keeping occupants safe and connected. The most important information is fed to the driver in the traditional way, via a three-gauge cluster with a large analogue tachometer in the centre, flanked by a speedometer and an information display. The standard infotainment unit offers a high level of equipment including a USB/auxiliary input, six speakers and Bluetooth connectivity, while the enhanced version features a seven-inch touchscreen display.

The pursuit of driving pleasure hasn't been at the expense of occupant wellbeing and the new Fiat 124 Spider has been engineered to meet the highest safety standards.

The Spider will go on sale in the UK during the second half of 2016 with pricing announced at a later date.

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deaths

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENT
DEADLINES OVER CHRISTMAS

Please note that the deadline for our weekly Cannock Chronicle for Thursday, December 24, is Wednesday, December 16, at 4pm and for Thursday, December 31, the deadline is Friday, December 18, at 4pm.

ANSLOW

Christopher

Lead Singer of Penny Farthing.

Passed away peacefully on Thursday, December 10, 2015, aged 69 years.

Funeral details are to follow.

All inquiries c/o

A.J. Sellman
Family Funeral Directors
79 Church Street,
Cannock, WS11 1SW
01543 502322

BRICE

John William

(Junior)

Much loved partner of Karen, loving Dad to Elliott and Molly and much loved Son of John and Gillian, passed away very suddenly on November 30, 2015, aged 43 years.

The Funeral Service will take place at Streetly Crematorium, West Chapel at 3pm, Thursday, December 17.

Family flowers only by request.

Donations for B.H.F. (British Heart Foundation) and/or Guide Dogs for the Blind may be forwarded to Funeral Directors.

JOHN SHORT AND SON

3 High Street

Chasetown

Burntwood

WS7 3XE

Telephone 01543 686204.

All friends very welcome at the Crematorium Service.

John was dearly loved and will be greatly missed by all his Family and Friends.

X X X

COPLEY

John Stuart

Passed away peacefully on December 5, 2015, aged 78 years, surrounded by his Family.

Husband of Marlene and Father of Andrew, Simon, James, Katherine and Sarah.

Privately Cremated.

Please join us for a Memorial Service on Monday, January 11, 2016, at 11.30am, at St Paul's Methodist Church, Rugeley.

Any donations to St Giles Hospice.

EDWARDS

John Albert

Passed away quietly on Sunday, December 13, 2015. Beloved Husband of Marie, Father and Grandfather.

The Funeral has been arranged for Wednesday, December 23, at 10am, at Victory Church, Rugeley, then at Stafford Crematorium, at 11.30am.

Family flowers only, donations to Orchid Ministries, c/o Victory Church.

There is no specific dress code and the Wake will follow at The Plum Pudding, Armitage.

HARDMAN

June

nee Bowen

Passed away suddenly on Wednesday, November 25, 2015, aged 81 years.

Funeral Service to be held at St. Lukes Church, Cannock on Friday, December 18, at 11.00am.

Followed by committal at Stafford Crematorium.

Family flowers only, donations if desired for:

Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland Diamond Grant.

All inquiries to:

GEORGE STACEY

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

30, Greenheath Road,

Hednesford

WS12 4AR

HARRIS

Constance

(Connie)

Late of Norton Canes, passed away on December 4, aged 93.

The Funeral Service and Interment will take place at St James the Great Church, Norton Canes at 11am, on Monday, December 21.

Family flowers only by request.

Donations for Give a Child Health Charitable Fund c/o Funeral Directors

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HARRISON

Patrick

(Pat)

Peacefully passed away on Saturday, December 12, after a short illness.

He is survived by his Wife Dot and his three Daughters Sharron, Andrea and Janine.

The Funeral will be held on Wednesday, December 23, at 9.30am, at St Thomas' Church, in Huntington, followed by a short Service at Stafford Crematorium, at 10.30am.

The Wake will be held at Cannock Conservative Club from 11am onwards.

The Family have asked that there are no flowers please with donations in lieu of flowers being made to Katherine House Hospice.

JACKSON

Horace William

Passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loving Family on Tuesday, December 8, 2015, aged 81 years.

Horace was much loved and will be missed dearly by all of his Family and Friends.

The Funeral Service will take place on Tuesday, December 22, 2015, at Bushbury Crematorium, East Chapel, at 11.30am.

Flowers welcome.

Donations, if so desired for Air Ambulance.

All inquiries c/o

A J Sellman
Family Funeral Directors
67 Station Street,
Cheslyn Hay WS6 7EG
01922 410612

JACKSON

Horace William

Of Cheslyn Hay

Passed away on December 8, 2015, aged 81 years.

Funeral arrangements to be announced later.

Will be sadly missed by Wife Margaret and Family.

NELL

John Frederick

18.07.1942

05.12.2015

John sadly passed away peacefully at home.

He was a wonderful loving Husband, Father and Grandfather.

Will be greatly missed by loving Wife Pauline, Sons John and Matthew, Daughters-in-Laws Alison and Lyndsay, Grandchildren Callum and Lauren.

X X X

Brother

John you left me with a broken heart, but how wonderful to have had a Brother so loving and kind to me.

I love you always.

Sister June and Family.

in memoriam

HARDWARE

Leonard

One Year December 17, 2014.

Memories of You are mine to treasure, loving you always Len, forgetting you never.

Time slips by and goes on, but in my heart you are never gone.

I think of you always and talk about you too, we had so many happy memories Len, I wish I still had you.

Love You always.

Loving Wife Muriel and Family.

X X X



HUGHES

Audrey

Nothing has changed sweetheart, you're still the only girl in the world, I shall love you forever my gentle Aud.

Trev.

X X X

Mom

Every day I miss you, I shall love you always.

L.F.M.

Mark.

X X X

MYRING

Yvonne

December 26th 2012

Another year that's come and gone, but memories still live on.

Love, Dorothy, John and Family.

X X X

NIXON

Jay Ward

31.08.1968 - 16.12.2014

Each of Us in our own way have special thoughts of you today.

No longer in our lives to share, but in our hearts you are always there.

We miss you Son.

Mom and Dad, All Families and Friends.

acknowledgements

BERRY

Colin

Jen and Family would like to thank everyone who attended Colins Funeral.

Thanks also, to Cannock District Nurses, St. Giles Hospice, The Carers from Advance, Dr. Myints surgery, Sellmans Cannock and Lorraine for conducting the Humanist Service.

Donations are being divided between St. Giles Hospice and Cannock District Nurses.

Thank You so very much.

coming of age



HEWITT
Georgia

Happy 18th Birthday Georgia.

We're so proud of you.

Lots of Love Mom, Dad, Billy and The Meacham Crew.

X X

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4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

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guns & dogs

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pets corner

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3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

vets

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5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

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business directory

business opportunities

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6 Property

accommodation to let



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7 Jobs

full time - general

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8 Motoring

cars over £1500

FORD FIESTA Titanium, 62 reg., one owner, 37,000 miles, full MoT, full spec, mint condition. £3,995. 07340 169011.

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PEUGEOT 3008 Sport, 2000cc diesel, HDi, 59 plate, 10 months MoT, dark blue, 100k, FSH, £4,500 ovno. 07709 295577 Cannock.

PEUGEOT 307 1.6 petrol, 2006, 46k, Miami blue, new Mot, excellent condition, service history £1,695 ono. 01543 573130. 07802 694664.

TOYOTA YARIS 2005, lady owner, low mileage, MoT till April 2016, good runner, immaculate condition, £1,750 ono. 07580 998347.

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED
that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

AUDI A4 2.5, V6, diesel, auto, V reg, 117,000 miles, MoT, needs some attention, £395. 01922 492321.

RENAULT LAGUNA EXPRESSION 1.9DCI, diesel, 2002, 4 months MoT, 138k miles, 5 doors, alloys, good condition, £450 ono. 07404 341248.

VAUXHALL CORSA LIFE 2008, (08) 5 door 73,000 miles, black, alloys, electric windows, electric mirrors, air con, long mot, nice condition **£2,695 ono. 07773 529080.**

VW GOLF GT 2.0, V reg, 12 months MoT, full leather trim, very nice car for year, 128,000 miles, £750 ono. Telephone 07730 480269.

commercial vehicles

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Based at Cannock, you will support and assist the Area Managing Director (West) and the Marketing Director (Midlands & Shires) to operate at maximum effectiveness and present a positive and welcoming public face of the company. Key responsibilities will include providing general office administrative support (typing letters, filing, photocopying), dealing with incoming phone calls, email and post, organising diaries and minute taking. You will also organise travel and accommodation for the Directors and other Senior Managers and meet and greet visitors to the site.

You must have proven experience of working within the office/admin environment and experience of providing admin support to Senior Managers is preferred. Qualifications in English, Maths and Administration, or equivalents, are also preferred. You must have a good working knowledge of Microsoft Office, in particular Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Outlook, have good organisation and communication skills. Excellent attention to detail and the ability to work flexibly and to tight deadlines are also essential.

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Closing date for applications: 8th January 2016.
Interview date: 27th January 2016.

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9 Local Information

public & legal notices

10 Personals

personal

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Women seeking men

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SAMANTHA, 42yrs, seeks gent for festive season, doesn't want to be along again. Age/looks unimportant, GSOH essential. **Box: 4140774. Text only.**

YVONNE, single mum, happy with life, but would like to meet someone to share fun times with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420269**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673**

JACKIE lonely and looking for male company, 48-65. Need a bit of love and affection? Then I'm your girl. call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418169**

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 3007 Box 418167**

LYN, 43, divorced very lonely single mum, young looking, slim, attractive, WLTM similar male for companionship. Age/looks/Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418795**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715**

SUSANNAH, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417341**

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3015 Box: 405297**

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420237**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399**

JANE, 47, voluptuous female, long hair, brown eyes, generous curves, would love to spend cosy nights in with that special male. Age/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417985**

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times. dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420175**

TARA 22 tall slim but curvy with legs that go all the way up to heaven, WLTM very appreciative confident male for adult fun. Contact me anytime. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414701**

FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5077545**

PROFESSIONAL black female age 52, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5315901**

CATHY, 42, good looking brunette with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420073**

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287**

MAGGIE, 72 yrs young, good sense of humour, well presented, WLTM kind, sincere chappie to share coffee and a chat. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5310040**

LOUISE 35, dark hair, blue eyes, attractive ex air hostess, looking for fun times with older male for romantic nights in and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420043**

FRANCES, 45, busty female, loves nights in/out, seeking uncomplicated male who can occupy my free time for quality companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420003**

MARY, pretty, friendly, lots of fun, lives in Kidderminster, loves the theatre, opera, ballet, WLTM a lovely, charming, funny, genuine guy, 30s, to settle down with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419883**

LOU, 45, lives in Shrewsbury, WLTM a lady between 42-49 with blue eyes, must be kind, caring and funny to mend my broken heart, someone who likes to curl up on the sofa for cozy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419855**



SARAH, curvaceous brunette, 35, passionate nature, solvent, OHAC, WLTM date again, looking for male to take me out. Looks/Age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420207**

FELICITY, 38yrs, attractive, petite but shapely lady seeks gent for indoor activities! Age/looks/marital status unimportant but must be discreet and non demanding. **Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 420235**

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48yr old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, holidays etc, WLTM male for mutual companionship **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420195**

39 yr old independent single Mom, knows the benefit of having a good man in the picture. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5084796**

FREYA 24yr old single mum, looking for male for free time frolics, call me if you're interested, it could be fun! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419851**

LISA 38 slim attractive blonde, looking for a man who will appreciate a feminine, fashionable, fun, romantic sensual woman with a mind of her own. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419839**

SARAH 38, slim, nice looking, sensual, tactile, no ties, WLTM kind, loving male to enjoy affectionate relationship. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419821**

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights out, seeks gent for friendship, days out and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418277**

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773**

JULIA 47, looking for genuine, reasonably attractive male friend, may to lead to more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419695**

LADY Penelope seeks her very own Parker (47-58) to go on a voyage of discovery and romance. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4550237**

BLACK lady seeks white male over 60, any location, for friendship and hopefully a lot more. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4256384**

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

CHARLENE, 24, petite curvy young blonde seeks similar cheeky, fun loving guy for lots of fun and loving. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597**

JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn haired female, lovely figure seeks loving older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595**

SHARON 32, attractive black single mum of one, very tactile and passionate, WLTM male 45-65yrs for fun meets. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419579**

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417**

KAREN 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fit, clay pigeon shooting, GSOH, N/S, non drinker, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211**

CURVY, farm girl at heart, 32, 5ft 10, single mum, caring, kind, shy, likes walks, cooking WLTM tactile male farmer for LTR. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5067001**

FEMALE medium build, blonde hair, 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429**

WIDOW 50, blonde hair, GSOH, 5ft 5ins, slim, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415767**

MARIE, 43, fun blue-eyed brunette, fit and active, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417**

FEMALE 50's, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks gent with GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415871**

BLUE eyed female, blonde hair, slim, GSOH, loving, caring, understanding, seeking similar male, 55-55. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416989**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418117**

CAROL Ann, sensitive slim brunette very romantic seeks tall handsome male for fun, friendship and lots of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419385**

KIRSTEN, 36, attractive, blonde and very bored, seeking open-minded decent male for fun/friendship, 40-60yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419383**

VAL 41, pretty, cuddly, flirty, seeks similar fun loving male for an uncomplicated no strings relationship. Age/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416601**

MID naughty forties female looking fun, thrills and discreet meets, give me a call, you wont be disappointed. Any age with own accommodation. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409109**

DIVORCED female, attractive, sensual by nature, OHAC, bored with own company, looking to make life a little more exciting with likeminded man. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419219**

LINDA, 47, brown-eyed blonde, caring, loving and honest, many interests, seeks genuine male to share lonely evenings with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417211**

JOYCE, affectionate sensitive widow, bit of a romantic, seeks loving male for lots of TLC. Looks unimportant, it's what's in the heart that matters. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419143**

DEBBIE, 29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419075**

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287**

JULES, sensitive tactile, curvy brunette, hopeless romantic, seeks tall, loving male for fun, friendship and possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419033**

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845**

HEATHER, well travelled solvent brunette looking to share a large glass of wine and whatever follows with affectionate man friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419031**

PAULINE, 49yrs, very attractive, curvy divorcee, affectionate and fun, seeks laid back, sincere male for an uncomplicated, loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418925**

LADY young at heart, nice eyes, seeks man 42-52 with good sense of humour. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4881572**

VIRGINIA, outgoing social female, 24, tall slim and attractive, looking for fun times, maybe more. Can accommodate/travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418845**

LOOKING for the right chemistry with country loving gent who like me is looking for some extra fun in their life. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418843**

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609**

ATTRACTIVE professional lady, widow, 50's, likes walks, sight seeing, theatre, meals out, seeks genuine, professional gent, 5ft 9ins plus to make life more enjoyable. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418615**

JAN 35yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418609**

SENSUAL tactile, attractive female, long blonde hair, blue eyes, loves travel, wining/dining, WLTM genuine male for mutual companionship. Looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418587**



BROKEN hearted lady 39 seeks loving male to mend heart age 39/40. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4869116**

KAY, very young 45, fit and active, no ties, seeks similar young at heart, fun male for fun meets. Age/Status/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418777**

VIVACIOUS strawberry blonde who knows just what she wants, looking for caring male for spontaneous fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418445**

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369**

JO 55, curvy redhead, loves eating out, theatre, travel, looking for middle-aged prince charming to sweep me off my feet. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4464905**

GENUINE lady looking for genuine male, age 58-60, for friendship and to have a laugh with. So if that's you would love to hear from you. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4537136**

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights out, seeks gent for friendship, days out and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418277**

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks sincere, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414773**

WENDY, 40, slim, fit, bubbly female looking to meet a tall, slim, fit, mature male who thinks he can keep up. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418369**

EILEEN, slim green eyed brunette likes meals out and cosy nights in, seeks tall male who would make her laugh and brighten up her day. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418347**

FEMALE fun brunette, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287**

FEMALE seeking gent 55-70, down to earth, nice and intelligent who knows how to treat a lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417195**

YOUNG early 40's female, GSOH, kind, caring, considerate, seeks male for friendship, possible romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 410847**

CAROL 49, attractive, green eyed blonde, honest warm hearted, n/s with GSOH likes cinema, music, walking, meals out and travel seeking similar male. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4283683**

FEMALE, 50, short blond hair, blue eyes, 5ft 10, slim build, looking for a man 50- 55 with salt and pepper hair and GSOH. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4435776**

HEATHER, 34, single very attractive brunette, sensual and interesting, looking to add to life's experiences and adventures with professional male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418193**

Men seeking women

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

WAYNE, 40, cheeky, good career, likes gym. Looking for a lady who likes stimulating conversation and times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419829**

DARREN, 44, slim build, dark brown hair, green eyes, seeks genuine female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418809**

COLIN 48, seeks cuddly large big beautiful woman 45 to 55 for LTR, love, romance, hopefully likes cuddles, kisses, holding hands. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5308886**

52YRS old guy genuine down to earth looking for Mrs right for nights in and out, walking, cooking, lives life to the full. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5331215**

MALE looking to meet a nice lady for fun times to spend with. I am 72 and would like to meet a lady between 60 and 70. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5332896**

PHILLIP, 29 years old, 5ft 11ins, stocky build, green eyes, friendly, GSOH, seeks genuine friendly n/s female for friendship, possible relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5335424**

PHIL, 58, slim, OHAC, from Wolverhampton, looking for a fun lady for a no-strings relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420265**

GENUINE 56yr old male, divorced, OHAC, looking for nice lady for friendship, maybe more. Wolverhampton. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 405551**

CARING male, 57, OHAC, looking for female, any race, status and age for no strings discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411461**

STEVE 39, 5ft 9ins, medium build, likes walks, seeks female, slim-medium build, single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396709**

PHIL 55, divorced, 5ft 10ins, slim, OHAC, seeks female, 18 plus for discreet adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401875**

GENUINE male, 58, OHAC, looking for fun lady for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417601PHIL** 57, OHAC, discreet, seeks no strings fun with younger female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414991**

ADVENTUROUS 35yr old, slim, dark hair, likes music, cycling and photography, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

TALL attractive male, 55, would like to meet older mature women 60 to 75 for close discreet fun. You only live once. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4347071**

I am an easygoing guy looking for a female 55-66 for a meaningful relationship. I am very sincere and honest. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5326234**

MALE, 70, retired from NHS, seeking a lady for friendship and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420147**

WIDOWER 70 plus, seeking female for friendship. Love me love my dog. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417439**

VERY useful, attractive 58 yr old, GSOH, six foot tall, nice build, n/s, genuine, tactile, fit and sporty, looking for a women for nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420135**

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COLIN, five foot eight, blue eyes, bundle of fun to be around, likes growing fuchsias for showing, vintage tractor for showing, weekends away, going out and staying in WLTM a lady for friendship/LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420089**

STEVE 39, 5ft 9ins, medium build, likes walks, seeks female, slim-medium build, single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396709**

6FT well built guy, nicely groomed looking for fun intimate nights or day with slim/medium build attractive lady 35-55. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5132460**

ALAN, 56 year old builder, muscular build, five foot ten, fit, likes the gym, pubs, clubs and days out, seeks female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419975**

ATTRACTIVE, fit, sporty, tactile, youthful black male seek relationship with lady. N/S. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4851641**



WIDOWER, quiet, easygoing, slim, 5ft 7 tall, smart, varied interests, seeks slimish lady, 50 to 65 yrs for caring relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4906469**

TIM, easygoing honest male, discreet, uninhibited, seeks similar non-conformist averagely attractive, N/S female up to 65. Notts. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 375065**

LEE, 50, seeking an Asian female for discreet fun and maybe more. Dudley area. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419401**

Men seeking men

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

BI male, single widower, 58, seeks gay male friends near Tamworth. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4355756**

BI curious Gloucester guy 36, slim, married, WLTM gay or bi male aged 60 to 75 for fun times. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4930039**

BI male would like to meet same. 60 to 80 yrs. Must be able to accommodate. Coventry or Birmingham. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4931168**

TALL male 57, seeks older male 60 to 80 for adult fun. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4347071**

TOM young 59 attractive male, decent looking, fit, slimmish, good company & fun loving with many interests, seeking similar male. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4926340**

Women seeking Women

LONELY mother seeks female friends for enlivening/enlightening coffee chats, likes countryside animals etc. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4860241**

ATTRACTIVE full figure bi lady 58 seeks female of similar age for fun times. Cotswold area. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4636475**

36YR attractive black curvy female seeking boyish female local for relationship. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4483526**

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MALE 45yrs old, self-employed motor trader/mechanic, medium build, green eyes, average looks. I am a nice genuine and honest person looking for similar lady to share a honest permanent relationship and happy times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418709**

MIKE late 60's fit, active, genuine and generous, very passive seeks assertive lady any age / looks for mutual benefits. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4747481**

STOCKY, bold, unhappily married man, seeks similar very discreet female for exciting rendezvous. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4757315**

ATTRACTIVE tall black male would like to meet female for day time fun and discreet meetings, any age or location. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5077442**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

GENTLEMAN, 57, slightly mad but not bad, who will make you ever so glad that you answered his ad! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419307**

JAMES GSOH, likes theatre, meals out, socialising, seeking easy going female, 35-55. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417469**

PETE 47, enjoys walking, meals out, seeks female, age/looks/status unimportant, with similar interests for adult fun text only. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5063152**

MALE 60s WLTM genuine fun lady, 50/60s nights in or out, likes swimming, walks, music, good food etc for friendship or more. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4852727**

TIM, easygoing honest male, discreet, uninhibited, seeks similar non-conformist averagely attractive, N/S female up to 65. Notts. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 375065**

SUBMISSIVE 44year old WLTM dominant female 25-30 years who enjoys role play with friendship and maybe possible relationship. **Text only to Mailbox no: 5084114**

COLIN 61, lorry driver, 5'10", blue eyes, kind hearted, romantic, hobbies include growing fuchsia's for showing and I have a vintage tractor that I play with from time to time. Looking for similar who's up for a lot of fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418463**

MARK 40, 5ft 9ins, brown hair/eyes, attractive, good looking, OHAC/business, likes walks, day trips, cinema, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 348239**

PROFESSIONAL male, 41, own business, likes to enjoy life, clubs, pubs, cinema, gym, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 360283**

GENT 55, slightly mad, but not bad, will make you glad you answered his ad! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 408973**

PAUL 50yrs, Birmingham, with own house and own car, I have a good sense of humour and I like going out, I'm looking for the right girl for friendship/relationship. Call me when you can. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418465**

Friends

LUKE 60's, seeking young Asian friend, 20-30's to socialise with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414841**

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STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 (AS AMENDED)
ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991
STAFFORD LANE, CANNOCK
DIVERSION OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

NOTICE is hereby given that the Staffordshire County Council intend, not less than seven days from the date of this Notice, to make an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit any vehicle from proceeding in that length of Stafford Lane, Cannock between its junctions with Stagborough Way and A460 Hill Top island unless the vehicle is being used in connection with the works; or unless the vehicle requires access to premises on the length of road or is being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes. Pedestrian access will be maintained.

The preferred alternative route for traffic will be available via A460 East Cannock Road, Stagborough Way and vice versa.

The Order will come into operation on 04 January 2016, and the said works will commence on or as near as practicable to that date. It is anticipated that the works will be completed by 26 January 2016.

The Order will remain in force for a period of 18 months or until the gas main replacement works, which it is proposed to carry out on or near the road, have been completed, whichever is the earlier.

John Tradewell, Director for Strategy, Governance and Change
2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH

Ref: 529092; Enquiries: Customer Contact Centre; Tel: 0300 111 8000
http://roadworks.org

Date: 17 December 2015

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

POE Limited of 101-102 Anglesey Court, Towers Business Park, Rugeley WS15 1UN is applying for a licence to use Unit 101-102 Anglesey Court, Towers Business Park, Rugeley WS15 1UN as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicle and 0 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at West Midlands Traffic Area Office, Hill Crest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Dated: December 15 2015

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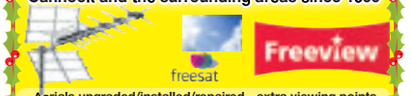
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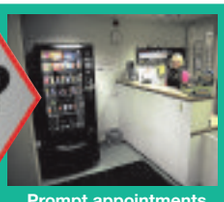
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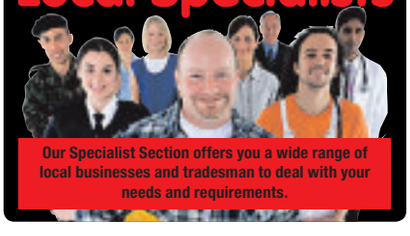
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Sharpe night is on the cards at Hednesford

BLACK Country man Lee Sharpe is back in the West Midlands this Thursday (December 17) as the feature attraction of an evening at Hednesford Town Football Club.

The 44-year-old former footballer, who was born in Halesowen, will talk about his career and life at Keys Park a week on Thursday, writes Craig Birch.

The talented winger left home to join the youth set-up at Torquay before Manchester United came calling in 1988, the £200,000 transfer fee a British record for a YTS player at the time.

He spent eight years at Old Trafford and made 193 appearances, scoring 21 times, and was capped eight times at England Under-21 and full senior level.

He became Leeds' joint club-record signing in August 1996 when the Whites paid £4.5million for him, but injuries beset his career.

He was loaned and then sold for just £250,000 to Bradford City in March 1999 and helped the club to the Premier League, before his release in 2002 after a spell at Portsmouth.

It will be a more intimate affair at the home of the Pitmen, with standard tickets costing £20 and £30 with a photo. VIP passes - with a meet and greet and a seat on his table - are £40.

There will be a table buffet, raffle and live auction, with special deals on a table of 10. There's no age restriction, with Under-14 tickets £10.

Doors open for VIPs at 6.30pm and generally at 7pm. Call event organiser Darren Ashmore on 07813 380 554 or go to www.dkapromotions.com.

Willenhall battle team and weather

Willenhall RUFC 8 Wednesbury RUFC 11

WEDNESBURY finally managed to get their first win of the season, beating local rivals Willenhall.

This was a game both sides needed and wanted to win, a great game played out in atrocious weather, heavy rain and strong winds made kicking almost impossible.

It took Wednesbury 12 minutes to get the first score. Dan Till who had already missed a couple of kicks managed to get a penalty through the posts.

Within five minutes Till added a second penalty using the wind to bend the ball through the posts.

With old campaigners such as Gary Page, Dan Blake and Kevin Ferris using all their experience, along with the skill of the younger players Jordan Allwood and Alex Love, Wednesbury kept Willenhall on the back foot and restricted their opportunities.

However, with the conditions and a tight Willenhall defence it took Wednesbury most of the first half to get a try scoring opportunity.

With just five minutes of the half remaining Wednesbury were awarded a try near to the Willenhall line.

Using their dominance in the scrum they drove the home side backwards towards the try line, Jordan Allwood picked up the ball and dived over, no conversion.

With the weather deteriorating the second half was always going to be difficult Willenhall were kicking down the slope with the wind in their favour.

It took just 10 minutes for Willenhall to take advantage of the conditions, having put a kick towards the Wednesbury line their defence misjudged it and dropped the ball allowing the home side to pick it up and drive over, no conversion.

Wednesbury were forced to make changes through injuries, prop Kevin Ferris left and was replaced by Luke Pittaway.

With 15 minutes left Willenhall were awarded a penalty which successfully converted, this made for a very tight finish to the game. Willenhall threw everything at Wednesbury.

Single goal decisive as Hayes lose on the road

Midland League Div 1
Leicester Road 1 Heath Hayes 0

HEATH Hayes travelled to Barwell to take on Leicester Road and were desperately unlucky not to return with at least a point but a single goal from the home side proved decisive.

The home side, who had beaten league leaders Nuneaton Grif 4-0 the previous week, opened up in fine style and Mark Wiggins pulled off a smart save to deny the dangerous James Hicks and keep the scoreboard empty.

Hayes began to find some rhythm and both Joe Pickering and Joe Hartshorne had goal-bound efforts cleared off the line.

Hartshorne then brought two fine saves from keeper Will Hyland as the home side struggled to cope with the pace of the young Hayes striker.

However, a momentary lapse of concentration on 38 minutes by the Hayes defence allowed Tom McGlinchey space to run through and give his side a lead to take them into the interval.

The second half was much the same as the first with Hayes playing some of their best football for several seasons but some resolute defending denied them the crucial breakthrough.

Substitute Dimitri Dunkley twice shaved the woodwork and a Jack Partridge piledriver was inches wide.

The game which had been very entertaining to watch ended on an unfortunate note when Hayes skipper Jack Arrowsmith and Roads Matt Stenson were sent off.

During the match there were six players booked.

Upbeat Cannock lose it all late on

Cannock 17 Ludlow 20

CANNOCK welcomed Ludlow to the Morgan ground on a windy Saturday afternoon.

Mood had been low of late with multiple injuries and after an uplifting talk from John Shirley the feel good vibe was back.

The visitors started proceeding. From the offset, the aggression was evident. Dave 'Shove' Lovell carried with intent into the heart of Ludlow.

Luke Jordan back in at No.9 shipped the ball to Will Jukes who beat the first two tacklers.

Fullelove was back at his line breaking best and made more yards.

Shirley then broke tackles and offloaded to Freeman who went over.

From a line out the really impressive Ludlow No.10 carved the defence in two and fed the No.15 who gassed to the line.

Cannock set up the maul from a line-out. Ludlow couldn't stop the train and Freeman went over again after a 15 metre drive.Again Cannock stepped it up. Jordan spotted space down the blind and shipped quickly to Pedley. Great pace and flair from Humphries, Frost and Freeman allowed Pincombe to burst through a gap and score.

Camped

The only blip in the game was the failure to finish. The lions were camped in Ludlow's 22 for 10 minutes and failed to convert the pressure to points.

Daniel Blake and Dave Edwards linked well under pressure to set up another attack but again the important score was left wanting.

Ludlow showed why they are where they are after five minutes of pressure their No.10 again went over to level scores after the conversion.With two minutes on the clock a penalty was also converted for the away side. 17-20.

Now Cannock were going all out.Cannock tried valiantly but Ludlow had shut up shop and eventually a knock on meant the victory went to Ludlow.The seconds went down 24-17 to a strong Handsworth team

In the junior section the U-9s travelled to Willenhall and were defeated narrowly in both games. Match One Cannock 9 Willenhall 8, Match Two Cannock 12 Willenhall 9

Forest snatch Wolves win away



James Henry is upended by Forest midfielder Henri Lansbury during the match at Molineux

Wolves 1 Notts Forest 1

IN a season of missed opportunities, here was yet another for Wolves.

Having led 1-0 for 65 minutes and created chances, they succumbed to Dexter Blackstock's soft equaliser just 10 minutes from time.

As ever with Wolves this season, it wasn't for a lack of trying that they failed to beat their fairly limited opponents. Sadly, a lack of quality was again their Achilles heel, particularly in central areas.

In the continued absence of the benched Benik Afobe, their most likely source of goals came down the flanks, particularly through man-of-the-moment Jordan Graham, whose wing play was at times scintillating.

So too were his set pieces, and one such well-placed free-kick was served on a plate for Ethan Ebanks-Landell to nod home the opening goal.

But for all their effort and spirit, Wolves lacked that bit of magic.

On the plus side, they are now unbeaten in five, albeit having drawn four of those, and are just two points behind their total of this stage last season.

But Kenny Jackett knows his team have a lot of improving to do.

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Blues stem losing streak in Boro draw

Middlesbrough 0 Blues 0

BLUES ended their three-match losing streak in the Championship with a battling draw at promotion-chasing Middlesbrough.

Gary Rowett's side frustrated second-placed Boro to claim their first point in over a month, denying the Teessiders their fourth consecutive league win.

Aitor Karanka's men managed to keep hold of their automatic promotion spot, but David Nugent was sent off late on to round off a disappointing afternoon.

Boro started brightly and almost took the lead in the second minute when Emilio Nsue burst forward before laying off for Adam Clayton, whose delicate chip was turned round the post .

Dimi Konstantopoulos did well to block Demarai Gray's effort.

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Late flurry proves too much for Burntwood

Midlands 3 West North
Newcastle 21 Burntwood 9

WATERLOGGED pitches at Burntwood saw this fixture relocated to the Potteries which meant Ben Holt's side were on the road for the third week running against a team in the running for promotion.

Fortunately, they turned in a much-improved performance after their trouncing at Ludlow.

They returned without any league points but the scoreline was not a fair reflection of the game. Newcastle only pulled clear with 14 points in the last 15 minutes.

Aza Dunet was in good place-kicking form but each time he landed a penalty goal, the hosts responded with a converted try, two of them coming from Burntwood errors.

One was a missed pass between the half backs and another came from an overthrown line out.

The line outs were untidy but the Burntwood scrum, with Jake Ranson in the front row back from a long term injury, went well as did their defence in general.

Craig Seedhouse showed good control until he went off injured in the second period.

Rob Jones also impressed when he moved from wing to full back in the second half reshuffle.

The seconds also lost out at Newcastle in their merit table game and the colts lost out on a game altogether on Sunday due to Telford Hornets recently dropping out of the league.

Burntwood go into the Christmas break with another away trip and their task doesn't get any easier as they travel to face table-toppers Tamworth.

O'Driscoll happy to talk to Banks's

FANS' favourite Sean O'Driscoll would be willing to speak to Walsall regarding their vacant manager's job – but has not been approached by the club.

Reports claim the former Doncaster Rovers boss is keen on the vacancy made available following Dean Smith's departure to Brentford. However, the 58-year-old has not submitted a formal application nor has he spoken to any club officials.

O'Driscoll is looking to relaunch his managerial career after leaving high-profile coaching roles with England under-19s and Liverpool. He is friends with former Walsall number two Richard O'Kelly who left with Smith last week.

O'Driscoll and O'Kelly have a close affinity following their successful time together at Doncaster where they won promotion from League One and stabilised the club in the Championship.

And through that relationship, O'Driscoll, who is now permanently based in Wolverhampton, has watched the Saddlers on numerous occasions this season.

He has also previously managed established players such as Milan Lalkovic and James O'Connor and is known to favour the attractive brand of football Saddlers fans have grown used to.

News O'Driscoll is yet to be approached by the Walsall board is likely to be met with disappointment by fans, many of whom see the former Republic of Ireland midfielder as the ideal candidate to replace Smith.

A poll on a fans' forum showed 50 per cent of those surveyed want him to fill the role.

Former Saddler and current Chelsea under-21s boss Adrian Viveash together with current caretaker boss John Ward were tied in second place with 11 per cent of the vote.

One manager who won't be heading to the Banks's is Malky Mackay who has odds of 20/1 with some bookmakers.

But sources close to the former Cardiff boss have indicated he has no interest in the vacancy.

Christmas period will define run, says Garde

VILLA boss Remi Garde conceded his side's next three games are likely to define their season after his former club Arsenal condemned them to their 15th consecutive Premier League match without victory.

The rock-bottom Villans are eight points adrift of safety – and still six from just climbing one place – having accumulated a mere six points from their opening 16 games of the season.

And with matches to come against relegation rivals Newcastle, Norwich and Sunderland over Christmas, Garde knows his side must start picking up victories, and quickly.

"Probably, we will have to win if we want to be safe," said Garde, who recalled Jack Grealish to the squad after dropping him for two games for partying after a 4-0 defeat to Everton last month.

"We can still be safe but we are coming into a period where we have to win.

"I see this situation as more of an opportunity than a problem, but we have to be ready. I still believe we are capable of winning the next game.

"I enjoy working in this league.

"We are struggling, I still haven't won a game and I'm very frustrated but I know in football you can change things with work."

An early penalty decision against right-back Alan Hutton – which referee Kevin Friend deliberated over for several seconds before finally pointing to the spot – set Villa on their way to a club-record 15th consecutive league match without victory.

Josh tops off the season as champ

TEENAGER Josh Hiatt was all smiles as he topped off a fine mini-moto season that saw him crowned British Champion.

The Heath Hayes speed king, aged13, was lauded by family and friends after claiming the junior 4.2 mini-moto class title by more than 100 points.

The youngster's dad Nigel, whose bike interest sparked his son's passion for the sport, could not be prouder of Josh's achievements.

He said: "The presentation was a really good night.

"To see him with his mates and for them to all be cheering for him was special.

"He loved it and didn't stop smiling. It was amazing when they announced him and he came to accept his trophy.

"Josh is a quiet lad but his determination to win is amazing. On a bike is absolutely where he's meant to be.

"He loves to be up there fighting for the front. For him to be doing something he enjoys is great," added his dad.

Hiatt has received plenty of local help from fellow riders Kurt and Matthew Wigley, the twin brothers, based in Hednesford, have been big influences on Josh's early career on two wheels.

Played

"Kurt and Matt and their dad Martin have played a big part for Josh," said Nigel.

"They've coached him and helped by giving him advice.

"Kurt and Matt were both there where Josh is and they know what it takes to reach a higher level.

"We want to put on record our thanks to the Wigleys and how they've helped Josh.

"Something just clicked with Josh and he stormed to the title. He's moving up a class next year and there's nothing to say he won't go well in that one too.

"He's getting better and better, faster and faster because he is pushing that hard.

"He comes off a lot but that's par for the course.

"If you don't come off then you're not pushing," added the proud father.

"He's got all the safety stuff. Top quality stuff, nothing comes cheap. Josh's mum Tracy doesn't see too much of it because she gets worried so for her to see him at the presentation evening was special," he added.

Nigel – who is a director at Carworks Midlands Body Shop in Cannock – revealed how family have also helped chip in to allow Josh to realise his dream and become crowned as champion.

"He won is title on a 4.2 air cooled engine," said Nigel. "The bike Josh will ride next season was brought from Italy with specifications that are geared towards him.

"His nan, Yvonne, got it for him as a 13th birthday present."

"We'd appreciate any help in sponsoring Josh if businesses want to get involved."



Champion Josh with Wigley twins Kurt and Matt at a recent bike show

Disruption as weather hits leagues

THE weekend's wet weather cut a swathe through non-league fixtures with numerous matches postponed.

Among them was Rushall Olympic's Evo-Stik Northern Premier game at home to Ilkeston and the First Division One South matches featuring Tividale, away to Gresley, and Chasetown who were due to play at Basford United.

The West Midlands Regional League also suffered.

The weather hit a host of matches which had to be called off including these Premier Division fixtures: AFC Bridgnorth v Gornal Athletic, Bromyard v Stone Old Alleynians, Black Country Rangers v Willenhall, Dudley Sports v Wolverhampton Casuals, Dudley Town v Smethwick Rangers and Shawbury United v Tipton Town.

Villa looking likely to get new chairman

VILLA are set to appoint a new chairman and another board member should the club not find a buyer, according to their website.

A report from a meeting on Sunday between fans' representatives and Villa chief executive Tom Fox said the move follows a statement from owner Randy Lerner that a new chairman would be appointed should the owner be unable to find a new buyer.

A report on the website of the Aston Villa Supporters' Trust states: "Tom (Fox) advised the announcement of the new chairman would be made imminently, as well as that of the appointment of an additional board member."

It is not known whether the appointment would be internal or external.

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165.70-13	£32	195.65-15	£40	195.50-15	£40	225.45-17	£49
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Sport

Cannock lose the match late on
Page 38

Josh tops off the season as champ
Page 39



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Legend Mick has faith in board choice

LEGENDARY goalkeeper Mick Kearns is confident Walsall's hierarchy will make the right decision when appointing a new manager.

But the 65-year-old has warned Saddlers fans to remain patient throughout the search, with the former shot-stopper believing it's very hard to replace a successful boss.

The Walsall board has been looking for a new manager ever since Dean Smith swapped the Banks' Stadium for Brentford two weeks ago.

And with Jon Ward, John Whitney and Neil Cutler in caretaker charge, Kearns insists there is no rush.

"From any club's point of view, it's very difficult to appoint a new manager when your old one leaves because of his success," Kearns said. "The club want to keep that continuity and find someone who can run things in a similar way.

"That makes the decision very difficult, so patience is needed.

"We need to appoint someone with the right philosophy, a philosophy the players are used to.

"When you are looking for a manager after a manager has been sacked, it's easier because you need someone to come in and turn the club upside down.

"This appointment is much more difficult but I am confident, I am really confident, they will get the decision right."

Walsall saw their League One clash with Fleetwood postponed on Saturday due to a waterlogged pitch at Highbury Stadium.

"But there is no rest for the Saddlers, who face Chesterfield in an FA Cup replay tomorrow, with Whitney revealing attentions switched to that game the moment it was confirmed Fleetwood was off.

"We were ready for the Fleetwood game, we had planned for it all week."

Albion's Saido is just wasting his career, says Bomber

ALBION legend Tony Brown says Saido Berahino is 'wasting his career' but others think head coach Tony Pulis is 'ruining' the young striker.

Bomber Brown wants Berahino – who played for the under-21s against Swansea at Tamworth's Lamb Ground last night – to give more in training in order to force himself into the team.

"He's got a great gift of scoring goals and there's not a lot of players that have got that ability," said Brown, who himself netted 279 times for the club.

"He's got it, we've all seen it, and while he's sitting on the bench he's not able to fulfil his potential and go on and score goals. He's ruining his own career."

Berahino has been on the bench for the last five games, and hasn't featured at all in the last three.

"But Albion are on a four-match unbeaten run and don't appear to be missing last season's top scorer.

"I don't know what's going on behind the scenes in training, " said Brown. "But when you're not in the side you should go every day into training performing your best."

Jackett accentuates the positives

Football

WOLVES boss Kenny Jackett felt the positives outweighed the negatives as his team were frustratingly held by Nottingham Forest at Molineux.

Dexter Blackstock's late equaliser cancelled out Ethan Ebanks-Landell's opener, with Wolves the better side but not able to get that crucial second goal.

They extended their unbeaten run to five matches but Jackett knows it's wins Wolves need to climb the table.

However, he was full of praise for his side. "I felt we had the technique. And the passing and the build-up was very good," he said.

"In the second period we played very well, looked the dominant team and looked more likely to score.

"Ultimately with that level of control in the second period we're disappointed we couldn't put the game away and capitalise on a lot of the good things we did.

"I thought we showed a lot of heart, our closing down was a lot better, our work rate from the front in terms of winning the ball back was better, our flow and our passing – we caused them a lot of problems. We're frustrated at not winning. The players gave everything and I think the crowd responded to our effort levels.

"Ultimately though we are disappointed again. We couldn't put Forest away."

Jordan Graham provided another assist – his third in two matches – while Wolves generally looked good at the back with Ebanks-Landell and Danny Batth forming a solid partnership. With Leeds to come at Molineux next Thursday, Jackett will be keen to turn draws into wins as Wolves look to get closer to the top six.

"There were more positives than negatives, definitely," he added.

FRANK'S NEW BOSS IN TOWN

FORMER Chelsea, Leicester City and Albion defender Frank Sinclair is the new boss at Keys Park.

The ex-Premier League defender was appointed just hours after former boss Bernard McNally was sacked from the National League North side.

Sinclair, who had a brief stint on loan at Albion in the 1991/92 season, led his first Pitmen training session on Tuesday night and will be in charge for Town's trip to Stalybridge Celtic on Saturday.

The 28-time former Jamaican international is joined by assistant Chris Millington, who he has previously worked alongside at Oldham Athletic.

Sinclair has previous experience in non-league with Colwyn Bay and Brackley Town as caretaker manager.

Sinclair said: "I'm pleased that it has come around now and I think I'm ready for the job.

"Chris is someone I have worked with for the last year at Oldham, he is a very experienced coach and I am hoping that he will help me improve the players, organise the team and make us hard to beat.

Supporters

"I have been helped along very much by the Chairman and we have left no stone unturned regarding the squad, the football club and the supporters and what is expected here."

Earlier in the day, McNally – relieved of his duties after just 11 league games – gave a brutally-honest assessment of his performance.

"Regardless of whether it was my team I was putting out or not, you're responsible," he said. "You can't use that old adage or any excuses. I was very disappointed with my players in the first half and quite down about it. But as manager you have to take the buck."

The Pitmen, who also relieved assistant Chris Brindley of his duties, are just one point above the relegation places, in 18th, as they prepare to head into a crucial festive period – including a double-header with former boss Rob Smith's AFC Telford United.

"I had hoped for those games," said McNally. "Eight points in 11 games is not good enough."



Frank Sinclair who has taken over as manager of Hednesford Town

Gainsborough 3 Hednesford 1

Prior to all the changes it was another frustrating afternoon for Hednesford Town on their travels.

A poor first-half defensive display was punished by some sharp finishing which left them with too much to do in the second period.

After a bright start in the wet and windy conditions a cross into the Hednesford penalty box was not cleared and the ball ricocheted to Marc Newsham, who finished smartly to give his side the lead.

In the 29th minute, things went from bad to worse when Newshamdoubled the lead with a fine finish on the turn giving Crane no chance.

As they looked for a way back into the game, the Pitmen finished the first half strongly.

The half-time interval saw striker Kyle Perry being introduced.

A Gainsborough free-kick crashed against the crossbar and when the ball was crossed back into the box Davis reacted first to score the third.

Just after the restart, some good play by the Pitmen put in Andy Todd and his searing 25-yard drive just missed the post.

Hednesford were now getting much more of the possession and it was no surprise when a cross into the box was headed home by Peers.

Khalsa take win streak to 11 games

Sporting Khalsa 2 Stourport 0

KHALSA'S winning league run was stretched to 11 matches as goals from Tes Robinson and Marvin Nisbett saw off a very game Stourport side.

The first half was a tepid affair, although a trio of opportunities presented themselves to the home side.

On 22 minutes, Khalsa top scorer Craig Bannister found himself in a shooting position and fired wide at the near post and a second later Nisbett managed to put Swifts keeper Dominic Richards under enough pressure for him to spill the ball, but the striker was unable to force home.

Things cranked up a little before half time, a looping header by Brad Lawley was tipped over the bar by Richards and two minutes later at the other end a shot by James Hill was well held by James Pemberton.

Richards produced another great save on 43 minutes, Lawley chesting a ball down to Bannister who hit a fine long-range effort.

Ben Maund fired the opening shot in the second half, forcing a routine save from Pemberton shortly after the restart.

Khalsa finally took the lead on 57 minutes, Robinson smashing the ball into the roof of the net.

Five minutes later Nisbett wrapped up the scoring, lobbing home after chasing a through ball.

Stourport captain Ryan Wallacott showed some real quality on 75 minutes, weaving through the Khalsa midfield and firing a decent effort just wide.

With 10 minutes to go, substitute Simeon Townsend's header looped just over from Nisbett's cross and with the clock ticking to full time Nisbett's header from a deep Bannister free-kick ended up going just over the bar.

Ethan wants to grab place in first team

ETHAN EBANKS-LANDELL hopes his performance in the draw with Notts Forest will help cement his place in the Wolves side.

Despite having made less than 30 first-team appearances, the 22-year-old netted his fifth goal for Wolves during Friday's Championship clash.

But it proved a mixed night for the defender who then found himself at fault as Dexter Blackstock fired a late leveller.

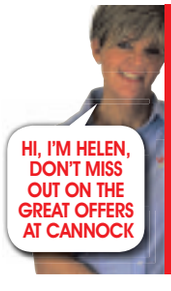
"It was a tough one to swallow against Forest," Ebanks-Landell said.

"I take full responsibility for their goal because it was my man at the back stick. It was a sloppy goal to concede."

★★★

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Welcome to Chase Matters

Cannock Chase COUNCIL

I am pleased to introduce the Christmas 2015 Chase Matters providing information to residents about the work of the Council.

I was appointed as Managing Director of the Council in February 2015 as part of senior management changes that saves £150,000 per annum. Financial austerity is a big challenge for the Council in delivering services. Cannock Chase Council has seen a 54% reduction in grant funding from Government over recent years. By sharing services and staff with Stafford Borough Council, transferring our leisure services to a charity and reducing management and administration, the Council has made savings whilst protecting frontline services for the public as a priority. The Council has also managed to freeze Council Tax and Housing Rents this financial year.

The Council has reviewed its Corporate Plan and priorities over the next three years to ensure that it is focusing all of its resources on what matters to the District and a summary is shown on the right hand side.



The Council is building more houses than ever this year, the unemployment rate in the District is just over 1% and we continue to invest to improve our leisure facilities and town centres. However, there's much more to do to improve the prosperity of Cannock Chase moving forward.

I want to wish all readers and their families a very Happy Christmas and New Year and I look forward to serving Cannock Chase residents, businesses and visitors in the years ahead.

Tony McGovern | Managing Director

View the digital edition of Chase Matters, visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/chasematters

Sign up to receive Chase Matters by email communications@cannockchasedc.gov.uk.

Your views and feedback is important to us, visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/chasematters and give us your opinion on how we communicate.

Keep up to date with the latest Council news through our Facebook page search for 'Cannock Chase Life' or twitter @CannockChaseDC

pull out and keep

Produced by the Communications Team Cannock Chase Council

Christmas/New Year opening times

Main reception at Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock

Beecroft Road housing office, Cannock

Rugeley area office

Hednesford area office

Wednesday 23rd December - open
Thursday 24th December - closed
Friday 25th December - closed
Saturday 26th December - closed
Sunday 27th December - closed
Monday 28th December - closed
Tuesday 29th December - open
Wednesday 30th December - open
Thursday 31st December - open
Friday 1st January - closed
Saturday 2nd January – closed

Look inside....
Please check dates for any changes to your Christmas bin collections

Cannock Chase Council top of the table for Green Flag Award

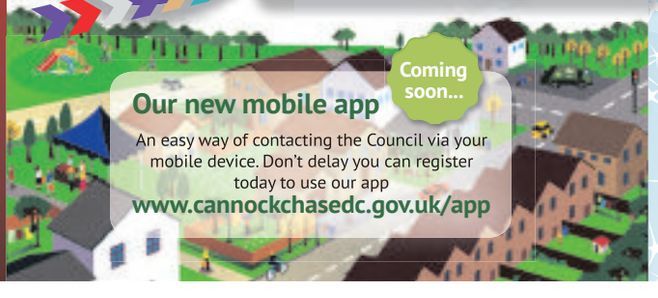
Did you know...
Cannock Chase Council has become the top performing District Council in Staffordshire and the West Midlands after scooping a fifth Green Flag award.

The latest award was for Stile Cop Cemetery which has recently undergone improvements and extension works. As well as retaining Green Flags at Cannock Park, Ravenhill Park, Castle Ring (plus Green Heritage Award) and Elmore Park.



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Cinderella

19th - 29th December
Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

The classic fairytale of Cinderella is this year brought to life by PMA Productions Ltd in conjunction with the Prince of Wales Theatre.

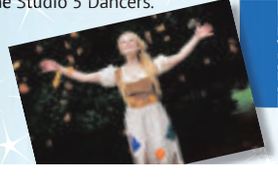
A talented cast has been assembled which includes Jodie Hamblet of My Mad Fat Diary, Shameless and currently ITV's Home Fires fame. Jodie is currently filming the second series of Home Fires but is very much looking forward to playing Fairy Godmother in Cinderella.

Funny man and Cannock's favourite Dame, Keith De'Winter returns as an Ugly Sister Conchita, partnering Hollyoaks' Darren John Langford as the other Ugly Sister Juanita. Straight from the UK National No.1 Tour of Blood Brothers, popular Karl Greenwood returns to the Prince of Wales to play Buttons. The professional cast is supported by the Studio 5 Dancers.

Sam Pope returns to the Civic too to play the handsome Prince but will the carriage take Cinderella to the ball and meet her Prince Charming or will the wicked step-mother and ugly sisters spoil the party, join us for this spectacular musical comedy pantomime to find out!

You are guaranteed all the traditional ingredients of a fun-filled, family pantomime including stunning sets and costumes, lots of comedy and plenty audience participation.





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To check eligibility or for more information please call the **Economic Development Team** on **01543 464219** or email **econdev@cannockchasedc.gov.uk**

Christmas Collection Calendar 2015

Please check dates below for any changes to your Christmas bin collections

Monday 21st December

Collections due Monday 21st will be made on Saturday 19th December 2015

Tuesday 22nd - 25th December

Collections due 22nd to 25th will be made 1 day earlier than normal i.e. 22nd on 21st and so on until Thursday 24th December 2015

New Year

Collections on Friday 1st January 2016 will be made 1 day later than normal i.e. 1st on 2nd January 2016

Collections return to your normal day from week commencing 4th January 2016

Normal collection days apply except for those days highlighted in **bold orange.**

December '15

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January '16

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Your new Waste and Recycling Calendar will be delivered in early March 2016

Do you know a Good Junior Citizen?

We are looking for individuals or groups of young people that are demonstrating a high degree of commitment, dedication and/or initiative to work or projects, both inside and outside school - making improvements to the environment and the community they live in.

Nominations can be made by anyone in the District, as long as they are not related to the young person and can be for an individual or a group or class.

Successful recipients of the award will each receive a certificate and goody bag and will be entered into an annual prize draw to win a £50 voucher.

The Good Junior Citizen Award is open to pupils in years 5 and 6, who have made a positive contribution to the local community and/or the quality of the local environment.

For more information and to download a nomination form visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/goodjuniorcitizen



Cannock Chase Council's Food and Safety Team have been visiting residents in their homes, giving advice about preventing food poisoning, particularly Campylobacter.

This nasty bug which causes severe cramps and diarrhoea, could spoil your Christmas as about 80% of Campylobacter poisoning comes from contaminated poultry, a favourite on our Christmas menu. Campylobacter causes an estimated 280,000 cases of food poisoning a year and in the region of 1000 cases were so ill they needed hospital treatment.

Campylobacter is easily preventable by taking the following steps:

- **DON'T -** Wash chicken or poultry before cooking, as it spreads bugs
- **DO -** Wash your hands after handling raw meat and before touching ready to eat food
- **DO -** Wash chopping boards and use anti-bacterial spray after preparing raw poultry
- **DO -** Change kitchen cloths frequently or even better use paper towel to wipe up.
- **DO -** Keep raw meat at the bottom of the fridge where juices can't escape onto other food.
- **DO -** Check your fridge temperature (which should be 5°C).
- **DO -** Make sure any frozen poultry is completely defrosted before cooking
- **DO -** Cook all poultry until meat juices run clear, with no pink or red
- **DO -** Make sure leftovers are covered and stored in the fridge

Cannock Chase Council's Food and Safety team wish everyone a safe and Happy Christmas and are offering free home safety visits and advice to residents in the New Year.

If you would like to book a home visit or find out more please contact the **Food and Safety team** on **01543 462621** email **environmentalhealth@cannockchasedc.gov.uk** or visit **www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk**

One Recovery Staffordshire

"One Recovery Staffordshire is innovative and inspiring substance misuse partnership operating across the county of Staffordshire. One Recovery is led by Addiction Dependency Solutions (ADS), and supported by North Staffordshire NHS Combined Healthcare Trust, Changes, Brighter Futures and Arch Housing.

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One Recovery staff are trained to treat addiction whilst considering the whole spectrum of an individual's life, with a particular emphasis on mental health and housing, ensuring whole person care is available for all. We offer confidential 1:1 work, family and carers support groups, mental health wellbeing groups, harm reduction services and prescribing clinics.

My role within the charity is the Outreach and Engagement Worker. To me this means bridging the gap between our service users and the community we work within. A key part of my role is to support service users overcome barriers that prevent them from accessing services.

To ensure no one slips through the net I have built up professional relationships with a number of housing, mental health and criminal justice services within Cannock.

Currently within the Cannock Chase District we have 474 people accessing our service. Within a 12 month period between September 2014 and September 2015 165 people successfully completed treatment with One Recovery, and 73 individuals engaged with Changes' wellbeing groups within the same 12 month period.

For any further queries or referrals to our service please don't hesitate to contact us on **01543468667**.
Angela Williams, Outreach & Engagement Worker

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Visit Cannock, Prince of Wales Market...

Cannock Market - opening times

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Mon:	9am - 4pm	Tue:	9am - 5pm
Tue:	9am - 5pm	Wed:	Closed
Wed:	9am - 4pm	Thu:	Closed
Thu:	8.30am - 4pm	Fri:	New Years Day
Fri:	Closed - Christmas Day	Sat:	9am - 5pm
Sat:	Closed - Boxing Day		

Bring the children to visit Father Christmas

Rugeley Market Hall every Saturday in December leading up to Christmas and on Christmas Eve.

Visit Rugeley Market...

Rugeley Market - opening times

w/c 21st December		w/c 28th December	
Mon:	9am - 4.30pm	Mon:	Closed
Tue:	9am - 4.30pm	Tue:	9am - 4.30pm
Wed:	9am - 4.30pm	Wed:	Closed
Thu:	8.30am - 4pm	Thu:	9am - 4pm
Fri:	Closed - Christmas Day	Fri:	Closed - New Years Day
Sat:	Closed - Boxing Day	Sat:	9am - 4.30pm

Visit Rugeley Market until the end of December and spend over £10 at any one stall and receive your £1 car park fee back*

*Subject to terms and conditions.

WANTED FLY TIPPERS

£100 REWARD

Are you concerned about the dumping of rubbish in our District and the environmental effects?

Have you seen anyone dumping waste or acting suspiciously at a site where waste has been dumped?

Would you be prepared to help the Council tackle fly tipping by reporting the incident by phone **01543 462621**
email **environmentalhealth@cannockchasedc.gov.uk**
online at **www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk**
Via Facebook search for **'Cannock Chase Life'**

One public spirited resident of Rugeley did and received a £100 last year after she reported an incident involving the fly tipping of two armchairs at Slitting Mill Lane, Rugeley. The Council is again offering this reward to anyone who provided evidence that leads to the successful conviction of any person, business or other organisation involved in fly tipping waste in the District.

Cllr Alan Dudson, Cannock Chase Council Environment Portfolio Leader, said
"I would urge everyone in the District to report any fly tipping. We are determined to stamp out fly tipping, which is a blight on our communities and our countryside."

Can you help?

The key information to pass on includes:

- The location, date and time of the incident
- The model, make, registration number and colour of any vehicle used
- A description of the offender or offenders.

For your own safety we would not recommend approaching those involved

In-house tree team

Earlier this year Council members agreed to provide a directly appointed tree team. This is a great achievement and commitment from the Council.

This new service will help to deliver a more cost effective and customer led focus. The service is now able to assist any Council department to maintain their trees.

As part of our customer focus we will be running a **FREE** Christmas tree chipping service. This will be located in three of our parks, **Cannock Park Ravenhill Park and Heath Hayes Park.** We are asking our residents to bring their de-decorated Christmas trees to one of the pen areas during the hours of **9am and 3pm (including weekends) from 5th January to the 24th January 2016**. They will be chipped during this time and the chippings will be available to residents to collect if they wish at a later date.

Langan's tea rooms

People with substance misuse issues can now access support to help them turn their lives around with the opening of a new recovery house and Tea Rooms.

Burton Addiction Centre, working with partners Cannock Chase Council and Staffordshire County Council, has refurbished a house at High Green, Cannock to accommodate those who have already completed rehabilitation and are alcohol and drug free and would like to return to live in their home area.

The new recovery house will help people access short term accommodation and support, along with education and skills training. The project will also actively engage families in the recovery process to give those dealing with addictions the best chance to maintain their recovery.

The neighbouring Langan's tea rooms, open to the public, is being run as a social enterprise and will provide volunteering and employment opportunities for people and the chance to learn new skills and make friends. All profits are ploughed back into providing training, work experience and other opportunities for local people in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

Hednesford Park Refurbishment

Hednesford Park is being transformed into a super destination Park whilst retaining the historical links with the Mining legacy that created the Park. Some of the features that were always intended to be installed by our forefathers have now been completed such as the completion of a circular path and tree avenue off Victoria Street.



The tarmacing works are progressing well, and all of the new paths and car park now have tarmac. The circular pathway along Rugeley Road edge of the park is very popular and has received positive comments from users. The circular area at the Victoria Street entrance has been surfaced and will be home to a new entrance feature in the future.



The Play area, teen zone, Multi-use Games area and the Parcour (free running station) were all opened on the 3rd December and the new skate park design has been finalised.

The Pavilion Refurbishment started in mid September and is on target to host revamped changing facilities, a separate referee's room, an upstairs community facility and a Café. The whole park has now been re-fenced on the outside of the old fence and new gates installed at Victoria Street and Rugeley Road. Opposite, the fencing at the War Memorial has been taken off site, refurbished and returned. The gates and new surface to the War Memorial were completed on time for the Remembrance Parade and the pillars have been restored to there original condition.The Council have accessed the original planting plan drawn up the Duke Of Westminster Head Gardeners in the 1930s and are re-landscaping the approach to the War memorial.





Events, training and activities in Hednesford Park

We are the first public park in the country to develop a Forest School program that support local schools.

The project has funded Forest School training and an outside classroom that recycled trees that needed to be removed to allow for the new works within the park. The Forest School program supports 2 local secondary schools and 5 local primary schools. The Forest School sessions provides a wide range of outdoor activities and games that encourage good communication and team skills in all abilities.

Through regular weekly activities in Hednesford Park the partnership with The Friends of Hednesford Park have been able to build a core group of volunteers that have attended a wide range of training from First Aid; Walk Leader, Butterfly, bat and bee identification, to Hedge Laying and Supporting Mental Health Issues courses.

Weekly Activities throughout the year are:

Monday: 9.30am Walk to Health;
1pm Forget-me-not Walk (Dementia Friendly)
Wednesday: 10am Vulnerable Adults Drop-in
Sunday: 10am Tennis for Free

The process of developing Hednesford Park Play Area has empowered young people to make decisions that affect their lives. We work with Hednesford Army Cadets and Hednesford Girls Venture CORPS Air Cadets who serve our community and understand the importance of the Ex-servicemen and commemorations like the Remembrance Service.



Lynn Evans
Community and Education Officer

The Community & Education Officer is working closely with the Friends of Hednesford Park (FOHP) on planning future events and activities in the approved Activity Plan, recruiting and training of volunteers.

Public perceptions and feelings of safety

Register your personal items on the Immobilise database

If your phone, bike, computer or any other registered item is lost or stolen, use Immobilise to instantly tell police, insurers and the second-hand trade. These actions help greatly in the recovery of your property and capture of thieves.

Benefits of registration:

- Immobilise helps police identify the owner of lost & stolen property thousands of times each day
- Loss & theft updates you make are immediately available to the police nationally
- Simplify insurance claims and police reports with certificates of ownership
- Great member offers from Immobilise's numerous supporters, often helping support provision of Immobilise
- These features are unique to the **FREE** Immobilise service

To register your property visit **www.immobilise.com**

Over 21 months to September 2015, 2,907 residents of Cannock Chase were asked to identify issues to be dealt with in their local area and the majority (66%) raised no issues.

Out Partying

Stay safe and drink responsibly. Planning a night out on the town? Don't accept drinks from someone you don't know.
Avoid Illegal drugs. "Legal highs" may not be against the law, but that doesn't mean they're not dangerous. When you're out in restaurants, bars and clubs, don't leave handbags or coats unguarded and don't carry large amounts of cash.

99% feel very or fairly safe outside in their local area during the day, and 88% after dark.

For more information visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/partnerships

twitter **@CCDCpartnership**

At home

Darker nights are here, make sure your home is secure by:

- Using a timer switch for lights. These are inexpensive, meaning homes are not left in darkness to alert burglars to an empty property
- Using door and window locks, even when someone is home
- Keeping your shed and garage locked - your tools could be used to break in to your house
- Getting parcels delivered? Beware bogus callers
- If you need to pop out, don't leave "back in five minutes" notes - burglars can see them too!
- Christmas presents under the tree look very inviting, but don't be a shop window for thieves
- Lock doors and windows and close your curtains
- Never leave keys or handbags downstairs overnight
- If you're going away for Christmas, let trusted neighbours know

In general residents perceive Cannock Chase to be a safe place

In Cannock Chase fear of crime is considerably higher than the actual risk.

On the Roads

- Don't drive if you have been drinking or taking drugs. So-called "sobering up" tricks never work, and Staffordshire Police will be targeting drink and drug drivers this festive season
- If you're hitting the New Year sales, don't leave your bargains in view in the car

Vehicle crime - freeze out car thieves on frosty mornings

Every winter, cars are stolen from driveways because owners leave them unattended with keys in the ignition while they warm up and the windscreens defrost. Insurance companies may not pay out for cars stolen in this way. It's advised that you:

- Clear windscreens with de-icer and a scraper
- Sit in your vehicle while the heater de-mists the windscreen

Online safety at Christmas

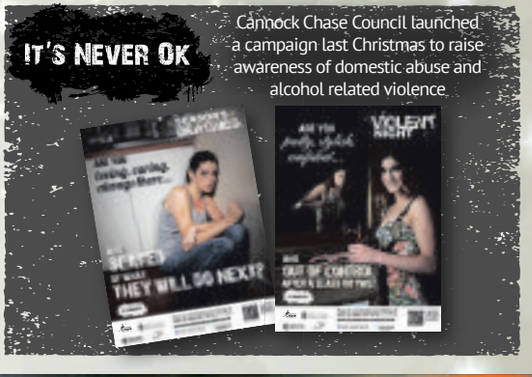
Remind children and young people to:

- Be careful not to give out personal information to people they don't know
- Be wary about trusting someone online. They can be lying about who they are, what they have or what they can give
- Make sure they make someone aware if they have witnessed inappropriate content. Children and young people should inform their parents or carers. If you feel more serious action is needed contact CEOP

Online gaming

Consider the following before letting children play online at home:

- Check what age group they are suitable for and whether the game has sex, violence, explicit language and anti-social behaviour within it
- Advise your children never to give out any personal information
- Make sure you child uses a suitable screen or character name (gamertag)
- Set a time limit for playing the game
- Check that children and young people are aware of how to report offenders, block and mute messages



Cannock Chase Council launched a campaign last Christmas to raise awareness of domestic abuse and alcohol related violence

Keep safe over the festive period

Cannock Chase Council is committed to ensuring that residents are safe over the festive period and has issued the following advice for anyone planning to use a taxi or private hire vehicle (sometimes called PHV or minicab)

Firstly, please be aware of the main difference between taxis and PHVs. A taxi can stand at a rank, does not need to be pre-booked, can be hailed in the street and has a fare meter. A PHV MUST be booked in advance. If you get into a PHV which is not pre-booked, neither you nor the driver will be insured and the driver is committing an offence.

How do I tell the difference between a taxi and a PHV / minicab?
Every Cannock Chase licensed taxi has a Taxi roof light which lights up at night and says "TAXI". You should not get in to any vehicle without a TAXI roof light, unless you have pre-booked it.

What else should I look out for?
Ensure that the driver is wearing a badge. S/he should be wearing it so as to be clearly visible. It should not be hidden under clothing such as a jacket, body warmer or jumper.

Where possible vehicles should be approached from the front so that the face of the driver and the fact that he s/he is wearing a badge can be clearly seen.

All Cannock Chase licensed drivers will wear a badge like this:



All Cannock Chase licensed vehicles will have a licence plate attached on the rear bumper. The plate is Yellow and Green for taxis and Red for PHVs:



Licensed vehicles also have an internal licence plate/ card which is yellow and is normally positioned just above the Tax Disc Holder.



Over the festive period, Licensing Officers will be making sure that licensed drivers and vehicles comply with safety requirements. The Chase Community Partnership has employed licensed taxi marshals to control the main taxi rank in Stafford Road, Cannock, they will be working from midnight - 4am on:

- Friday 18 December 2015
- Thursday 24 December 2015
- Thursday 31 December 2015

Other tips to keep you safe:

- Lone passengers should sit in the rear of the vehicle wherever possible
- Never accept a lift from a stranger in a car
- Wherever possible, pre-book your outbound and return journey before travelling. Many of the larger companies will now text you to say that your taxi is waiting outside. The text includes details of your taxi including the make and colour and the vehicle registration number
- If you take a taxi during the early hours of the morning (after you have been to a late night venue or nightclub) then you may be asked for payment upfront. This is acceptable practice but should only be done once a fare is agreed
- Unless you are travelling out of the Cannock Chase Council area, when you and the driver will decide the fare, the cost of journey will be displayed on the taxi meter which shows the running total of your journey.

Complaints about taxis contact the **Licensing Unit** at **Cannock Chase Council 01543 462621**. Complaints made to Taxi Marshals or the police would normally be passed to the Licensing Unit as soon as possible.